



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA

MOVING FORWARD

A Strategic Plan for Quality of Life Improvements in the Canadian Forces

**Standing Committee on National Defence
and Veterans Affairs**

October 1998

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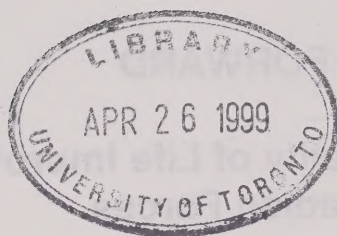
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in the Canadian Forces**

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has the honour to present its

THIRD REPORT

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), your Committee reviewed the issue of social and economic challenges facing members of the Canadian Forces.

Your Committee heard evidence on this matter, the substance of which is contained in this report, which is being laid as its input into the social and economic challenges facing members of the Canadian Forces.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	ix
CHAPTER I — FORGING AHEAD	1
RENEWING OUR COMMITMENT TO THE CANADIAN FORCES	1
CHAPTER II — PAY AND ALLOWANCES	9
INTRODUCTION	9
ENSURING EQUITY	10
PAY	11
THE RESERVES	13
THE MILITARY FACTOR	14
OVERTIME	15
ANNUAL LEAVE	15
ACTING PAY	16
MESS DUES	16
CFS ALERT	17
MATERNITY LEAVE AND SEVERANCE PAYMENT	18
BI-WEEKLY PAY	18
COST-OF-LIVING ALLOWANCE	18
PAY REVIEW	20
CHAPTER III — THE HOUSING CRISIS	23
INTRODUCTION	23
IMPROVEMENTS IN SINGLE QUARTERS	23
THE POOR CONDITION OF PERMANENT MARRIED QUARTERS (PMQs) .	25
THE ROLE OF THE CANADIAN FORCES HOUSING AGENCY (CFHA)	27
RENTS: WHY DO THEY VARY SO MUCH?	29
PERMANENT MARRIED QUARTERS: A TIME TO ACT	32
ENCOURAGE HOME OWNERSHIP	36
DEALING WITH MOVERS	38
POSTING ALLOWANCE	39

CHAPTER IV — THE INJURED, RETIREES, AND VETERANS	41
INTRODUCTION	41
THE NEED TO CHANGE ATTITUDES	42
PROVIDING CARE AND INFORMATION	46
IMPROVING PROCEDURES	49
CHAPTER V — THE MILITARY FAMILY	57
INTRODUCTION	57
THE FAMILY NETWORK	58
POSTINGS	64
CHILD CARE	66
SPOUSAL EMPLOYMENT	69
ACCESS TO SERVICES IN BOTH OFFICIAL LANGUAGES	73
CHAPTER VI — TRANSITIONS	75
INTRODUCTION	75
CAREER MANAGERS	76
ALTERNATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY	79
CAREER DEVELOPMENT	80
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY	83
CLOTHING	85
THE FUTURE	85
CONCLUSION	87
APPENDIX A — LIST OF WITNESSES	89
REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE	109
DISSENTING OPINION — REFORM PARTY	111
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS	123

PREFACE

At the outset of our hearings we were confronted with a considerable degree of cynicism, on the part of CF personnel, with respect to what we could accomplish on their behalf. The first question our witnesses confronted us with was, “what exactly can you do for us?” Followed by, “we are tired of being studied, nothing ever happens as a result so why should we have any confidence in you?” Fair questions and understandable ones given what the men and women of the Canadian Forces have been through in the past several years.

We took these questions seriously. However, we are a Committee with advisory powers. We cannot insist, we can only recommend. At the same time, the mere fact that we were asked to undertake such a thorough and wide ranging study leaves us hopeful that the authorities to whom we address our recommendations will listen carefully and act upon them. This report is our response to the concerns put before us and a blueprint for bringing needed changes into effect.

During our hearings and travels we were continually impressed with the dedication and sense of professionalism shown by the members of our military. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who gave of their time and energy to testify or submit written statements.

The Canadian Forces have had to face significant challenges in recent years. Large budget cuts, problems with leadership and poor living conditions have left many wondering whether they can realistically still maintain their commitment to the profession of arms.

Some observers have argued that the failures in leadership are systemic — so widespread that they are almost beyond solution. Others suggest that, while significant, problems of leadership have remained isolated and are being adequately addressed. The debate remains to be solved.

What is not debatable is the fact that the men and women of the Canadian Forces need support. They need the support and financial assistance of their government, so that when tasked they have access to the best equipment available. And, when at home, that they and their families enjoy a decent standard of living. They need the support of the Canadian public, who need to better understand the important contribution CF personnel make to our security and well-being. And, they need the support of the CF leadership who must never put their own interests ahead of those of the troops they command.

Finally, we would like to note that while Committee reports reflect the deliberations of its members others are involved in ensuring their success. A note of thanks must be

extended to the technical staff who made our work and travels run smoothly. We owe a special thanks to: our interpreters, who were ever present and performed their duties with a degree of professionalism and good humour rarely matched; to the members of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs (SCONDDVA) support team whose expertise and logistical help proved inestimable to both the members of our Committee and research staff; our Clerk, Eugene Morawski, who kept us organized and always provided sound procedural advice when called upon. And to our advisors from the Parliamentary Research Branch of the Library of Parliament, Wolfgang Koerner and Michel Rossignol for their subject-matter expertise and help in the drafting of our report.

CHAPTER I

FORGING AHEAD

RENEWING OUR COMMITMENT TO THE CANADIAN FORCES

Since the end of the Cold War, our Canadian Forces (CF) have undergone dramatic change. Bases have been closed, the defence budget cut, headquarters consolidated and the forces radically downsized. Between 1994 and 1999 the defence budget will have been reduced by 23%, down to \$9.25 billion from \$12 billion. When inflation is taken into account, this represents a 30% reduction in real purchasing power. The operating budget for the year 2000 will be approximately 50 to 55% lower than forecast in 1987. Personnel reductions have been in the order of 30%, to approximately 60,000 members. And, the civilian workforce will have been reduced by 45%, down to 20,000 from 36,000 employees.

The irony of all this is that, while the *peace dividend* has been vigorously pursued, our troops have faced an increased pace of deployment and found themselves in far greater conflict-ridden situations than ever before. Stories told by today's peacekeepers are more reminiscent of the "fire-fight" in the Medak Pocket than of walking the "yellow line" in Cyprus. Increasingly, our troops have been asked to do too much with too little.

All Canadians have had to cope with program cuts and the vagaries of economic adjustment. The Department of National Defence is not the only one to have been downsized. However, while we accept that all Canadians have had to sacrifice on behalf of economic recovery, we firmly believe that our service men and women have borne more than their fair share of the burden. The peace dividend is not one in which they have shared.

The consequences of rapid downsizing, during a period of intense operational tempo, have proven significant for Canada's military. Our personnel have been confronted with,

- economic hardship;
- inadequate housing;
- an increase in high-risk operations with equipment that was old and ill-suited to the task at hand and that does not inspire confidence;
- career stagnation;
- increased time away from home;

- multiple moves on short notice; and
- a perceived lack of public recognition for their efforts.

While much of this holds true for the public at large, it is important always to remember that our military functions under the conditions of **unlimited liability**. Serving members are deployed at a moment's notice to any theatre of conflict and are asked to put their lives at risk in the interest of us all. With respect to the Canadian Forces, the foregoing has made for **poor morale and a sense of abandonment**.

Such conclusions may be rather stark, but it was because of a “sense of something not being right” that we were asked to undertake our study on the quality of life in the Canadian Forces. Our study marked the first time, in the history of the Canadian Forces, that our serving personnel were encouraged to address their concerns in a public forum, and to do so without fear of recrimination. While some may have remained reticent, because they feared reprisal, the majority were anything but. However, when some incidents were reported, the Chief of Defence Staff issued a letter reaffirming that CF personnel could freely and openly communicate their views to SCONDVA. The transcripts of testimony bear witness to the fact that our hearings were open and that the opinions expressed were offered without hesitation. In addition to public hearings, we were also able to speak privately with our service men and women on numerous occasions. Again, our conversations were frank and open.

Hearings were held at major bases in Canada and at Canadian locations in Bosnia and Germany. Wherever we went, we were impressed with the professionalism and dedication to service shown by members of the CF. Although many told us of their particular concerns and frustrations, it was very apparent that “duty to mission” was their first priority.

While our main concern was with the non-commissioned ranks, we also heard of the frustrations among officers who have been forced to make hard choices that could never prove popular. Maintaining operational readiness — the *raison-d'être* of any fighting force — often meant that needed resources had to be diverted from housing, or other base infrastructure, that could have a direct bearing on the quality of life of the everyday soldier. Such decisions can never be easy, yet again, all agreed — officer and enlisted personnel alike — that duty first meant dedication to mission. All too often, the lament became: “we will take on whatever is required of us, but, give us the needed tools”.

At the outset, some of us may have felt that ours would be a rather technical and matter-of-fact inquiry. It quickly became apparent that such would not be the case. We could not have guessed at the depth of malaise felt by many. We could not have envisioned the degree of frustration and desperation expressed by countless witnesses. Often the stories we heard proved heart wrenching, making us wonder how things could have gone so obviously wrong.

We will not soon forget testimony such as that of Major Bruce Henwood who lost both legs to a land mine in the former Yugoslavia. His fate was tragic, not only because of the injuries he received, but also because of the way he was subsequently handled by the Canadian Forces. Major Henwood was wounded during a peacekeeping operation and then set adrift by his own.

Expecting to have his and his family's needs taken care of — as he had always been told they would be — Major Henwood soon found that matters would be up to him. Bed ridden, and a thousand kilometres from home, Bruce Henwood had to find out for himself what services and entitlements were available, plan his own transition to civilian life, see to the needs of his family, manage a series of extra financial burdens, and navigate his way through a web of interdepartmental bureaucratisation. His requests for information and assistance had to be made repeatedly.

Unfortunately, Major Henwood's is not the only such case. *No member of the Canadian Forces should ever have to repeatedly ask about his or her entitlements upon injury. It is the responsibility of the Departments of National Defence and Veterans Affairs to ensure that wounded or injured members and their families be advised of their entitlements at the earliest possible moment. The onus is on the Departments to ensure that serving members and their families receive all that they are entitled to.*

We were also struck by the incongruity between the expectations members had about life in the military and the reality they came to live. Many found their expectations frustrated because of poor pay and substandard housing. They were frustrated not only because comparable civilian occupational groups were perceived as better compensated, but, even more so, because the promise of bringing military pay to public service equivalency — made in the 1960s — was not properly honoured.

On the West Coast we were told of sailors who had to live onboard ship because they could not afford local rents for even the most basic accommodation. We heard of serving personnel who had to go to food banks in order to be able to feed their young families; a more widespread occurrence than we could have guessed. Some of our personnel have had to endure housing that would be condemned if it were made available to the civilian population. *Members of the Canadian Forces must be fairly and equitably compensated for the work they do and the risks they take. Members and their families should never have to suffer the indignity of substandard housing, nor should they be reduced to charity in order to feed their families.*

The contribution of Canada's military to our national well-being and to international peace and security in United Nations and NATO operations is inestimable. Our troops are military professionals who have always been well regarded by the international community and are still the "preferred" peacekeepers. Recent floods in Manitoba and Quebec and the ice storm in Central Canada demonstrated how invaluable they are to our domestic needs.

However, while our military personnel have always taken pride in the uniform they wear and the vocation they have chosen, certain events have put them on the defensive.

Torture and murder in Somalia, inappropriate behaviour in the former Yugoslavia, and sexual harassment on bases here at home have come to reflect badly on Canada's military. Even though these have been the acts of only a few, many feel they have had to share in paying the price. At the same time, many also expressed the view that, when wrongdoing was punished or investigated, a double standard was invariably applied — one for the officers and one for the other ranks. The perception of such a double standard does little to instil confidence in the military's leadership. Too often we heard the refrain, "there is one standard for officers and one for the rest of us." It used to be the tradition that officers set the example and, when found wanting, were made an example of. *There should be no double standard, nor perception thereof, when dealing with wrongdoing in the Canadian Forces.*

Another theme we found particularly disturbing was the feeling among military personnel that they had somehow been forgotten by the nation they had sworn to serve. They suffer from a sense of abandonment and a belief that the only thing of interest to the public is the next scandal. How have we arrived at such a point? Perhaps it is partly the fault of the media which seems to prefer scandal to good news, perhaps some of the fault lies with the Department itself and its inability to put before the public stories of accomplishment, or it may be the fault of us all for not caring as long as things are going well. We might simply ask ourselves why it was that the story of the Medak Pocket took so long to be told.

There was little mention in the media in 1993 about what Canadian soldiers experienced during the heavy fighting in the Medak Pocket operation. Indeed, there was little public knowledge of the incidents until an article appeared in October of 1996 in the *Ottawa Citizen*. The story had been reported by a Canadian military public affairs officer in theatre who made it available to the media. European newspapers carried the story, but the Canadian media did not. The growing controversy, at that time, over the incidents in Somalia may have been a factor in the lack of news coverage in Canada. It took three years before the public was properly apprised of what our peacekeepers had to endure — witnessing the atrocities of ethnic cleansing, artillery barrages, fire fights, wounded comrades, and the effects of post-traumatic stress. Our troops, including a number of reservists, acquitted themselves with distinction in very difficult circumstances. But, upon their return home, they received little in the way of recognition. *It is important that we properly recognize members of the CF for the courage they display and the selfless sacrifices they make. They must again wear their uniforms with pride and with the feeling that theirs' is an honourable calling.*

In order to maintain operational effectiveness, it is also necessary to have an effective family support system in place. Troops in the field do not need the added burden of

worrying about the well-being of family members at home. Such concern was a recurrent theme throughout our hearings. Members are often sent on dangerous deployments with very little notice. Making provision for daycare, ensuring that sick family members are adequately cared for and the myriad of household concerns that are a constant preoccupation for us all should not be matters of serious concern to those in operational theatres. *We must ensure that adequate family support programs, meeting consistent standards, are always in place and readily accessible.*

Extensive downsizing has meant that many have had to take on extra duties at a time when promotions in a number of trades have been virtually frozen. Many trades have also been “collapsed,” requiring personnel to learn new skills. At the same time, the military pay structure has not been adjusted to take these factors into account. The result has been more work with fewer people and the frustration that comes with doing a good job while suffering career stagnation. *The military pay structure must be adjusted so that members receive proper recognition and compensation for additional taskings and for periods of deferred promotions.*

Throughout our hearings we learned that our military personnel — particularly at the lower rank levels — feel themselves to have become the victims of a series of broken trusts; they have been let down by:

- their governments,
- their leadership, and
- the public at large.

If we are to maintain an effective military we must re-establish, on a firm foundation, the trust between our military personnel and those to whom they look for leadership and recognition. As Parliamentarians, we need to recognize that the members of the Canadian Forces are constituents of us all and that all Parliamentarians share the responsibility for their well-being. Government must come to terms with the fact that there is a cost attached to the services provided those on the Treasury benches have to recognize that adequate resources must be expended. Senior military leadership must always put the interests and well-being of their members ahead of their own. When these are achieved, Canadian citizens must recognize that the benefits we share as members of a free and democratic society are ours because they are ultimately ensured by those who defend us, and that in doing so, members of the Forces sacrifice much in the way of their own personal freedoms.

During our hearings it was suggested that we need to make explicit the unwritten “social contract” which has traditionally existed between the military and government, and by extension, with the public at large. The contract, so the argument goes, is an implicit one — guaranteeing military members adequate recognition and benefit for the sacrifices

they make and the service they render. Unfortunately, attempts to articulate exactly what should be entailed in such a specific statement of intent were not easily come by. Tacit understandings do not easily lend themselves to articulation. Indeed, while abstract statements, hung on mess hall walls, may make for appealing decoration they are unlikely to help solve the problems at hand.

Rather than ruminate in the realm of the abstract, we have concluded that our **national** commitment — *in essence a moral commitment* — to the Canadian Forces must be based on the following concrete principles:

- That the members of the Canadian Forces are fairly and equitably compensated for the services they perform and the skills they exercise in performance of their many duties. And, that such compensation properly take into account the unique nature of military service.
- That all members and their families are provided with ready access to suitable and affordable accommodation. Accommodation provided must conform to modern standards and the reasonable expectations of those living in today's society.
- That military personnel and their families be provided with access to a full and adequate range of support services, offered in both official languages, that will ensure their financial, physical and spiritual well-being.
- That suitable recognition, care and compensation be provided to veterans and those injured in the service of Canada. Here, the guiding principle must always be compassion.
- That members be assured reasonable career progression and that in their service they be treated with dignity and respect. In addition, they must be provided with the appropriate equipment and kit commensurate with their tasking.

It is upon these principles, or pillars, that the future of the Canadian Forces must be built. We also believe that these should provide a continuous check, or benchmark, for policy formulation and change. Underlying all of this is the firm belief, as enunciated by the Special Joint Committee on Canada's Defence Policy (1994), that Canada should maintain unified, combat capable, multipurpose armed forces composed of sea, land and air elements that are:

- properly equipped;
- able to operate together at home in defence of Canada's territorial sovereignty and security; and

- able to operate abroad in support of Canada's multilateral peace and security interests and responsibilities.

Our report is structured around the themes expressed in our statement of fundamental principles. We believe that our recommendations will help the Government and the Department of National Defence come to terms with current problems and future needs. We also hope that these recommendations adequately reflect, and attend to, the concerns put to us by the many members who testified. The one thing that became clear to us, especially while spending time with our troops in theatre, was that *there really is no equivalent profession to that of service in the Forces*. Whatever programs we put in place, or adjustments we make, they must clearly reflect this reality. At the same time, it is important to remember that the provision of adequate equipment and operational training remains a priority. In light of this, we, as a Committee, have great concern that the defence budget was not maintained at the level recommended by the Special Joint Committee in 1994.

Finally, we should note that much of what we recommend can be acted upon by the Department of National Defence itself. But, given the systemic nature of the problem, the cooperation of other departments and the Government will be required. Where appropriate, we will note the relevant actors and ask that their approach be positive and forward looking, and that, in their deliberations, they keep before themselves the unique nature of military service and the important benefits we all derive therefrom.

CHAPTER II

PAY AND ALLOWANCES

INTRODUCTION

Canadians will all agree that compensation should be based on the principle of fair pay for work performed. CF members believe this principle is no longer being applied to them. For those in the civilian workforce, equitable compensation is largely determined by market factors and collective agreements negotiated between employer and employees. These mechanisms are not available to the military. Military pay levels should be set by Government, subject to credible and real oversight by SCONDVA.

What then is fair compensation for assuming the strictures of unlimited liability? Insofar as military service is considered a “calling,” part of the contribution made by members is in the form of *selfless service* — service for which remuneration is not expected. However, there must be limits. When Forces personnel were deployed to help with the “ice storm” they worked long hours and received \$12.77 (taxable) in additional Field Operations Allowances; their entire additional daily entitlement for 12 to 18 hour days. Their civilian counterparts and the RCMP, on the other hand, were paid overtime for the extra hours worked. Military personnel were billeted in gymnasiums while civilian workers stayed in hotels.

It must also be remembered that many of those deployed had only recently returned from Bosnia and Haiti and were called back from leave or their training rotation. Many would go on training, after the ice storm, either in preparation for overseas duty or for the re-establishment of skills associated with their primary mandate. None begrudged the fact that they were asked to help and did so enthusiastically. At the same time, they could not but help compare their conditions of work and compensation with those of their civilian counterparts.

In considering changes to the compensation and benefits package we should also remember that our Forces need good recruits. The nature of modern warfare is changing and technical skills are at a premium. Increasingly, recruits are also coming with families and entry level pay is not always adequate when family needs are taken into account. As well, the nature of military lifestyle makes it very difficult to maintain dual income households. On the compulsory posting of CF members, spouses frequently leave well-paying jobs only to find themselves either unemployed or underemployed for long periods at their next location. It is therefore important that we not view the service member as a discreet individual, but as someone who is part of, or potentially part of, a wider social unit — the family. And, it is to the well-being of the entire unit that we must look.

ENSURING EQUITY

A properly designed pay and benefits package also needs to ensure that equity prevails for all CF members, no matter where they serve. While the principle of equality insists that we treat everyone the same, with regard to the application of rules and entitlements, equity focuses on the importance of outcome. Equity teaches that it is acceptable, indeed at times necessary, to treat people differently in order that they may enjoy equality of condition. If we are to do away with the myriad of frustrations faced by serving members, then we need to assure *equality of outcome*. CF personnel and their families living in high cost areas like Victoria should be able to enjoy the same standard of living as those located elsewhere. As a principle, *once rents and other necessities are accounted for, the disposable income of similar households at different locations should be more or less the same*.

Equality of outcome must be the guiding principle for putting in place an equitable pay and benefits package. However, to do so will require treating CF personnel differently from those in the civilian sector; including foreign service officers and members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Compulsion of service factors for the CF are far more stringent than for the latter two groups. *It is essential that this principle be accepted by those agents that play a key role in determining taxation and benefits for the Canadian Forces; namely, Revenue Canada, Treasury Board, and the Government itself*. Our recommendations are cast in light of the underlying assumption that CF personnel require differential treatment — an assumption we believe to be both reasonable and necessary.

In coming to our conclusions we have looked at pay and allowances in a holistic manner, rather than treating items on their own. We began with the basic question, “what exactly is the purpose of the various allowances and benefits assigned to Forces members?” In searching for an answer, what we found was a patchwork put in place to deal with the exigencies of the moment. Long-range planning and a clear sense of purpose do not seem to underlie the current system. We believe that rationalizing the various allowances and benefits into clearly recognizable and transparent entitlements should be a priority for the Department. Again, the overall system must ensure *equality of outcome* for all serving members.

Too often good intentions can lead to unintended, and unfortunate, consequences. During our hearings we heard how something as seemingly innocuous as the posting allowance can cause significant dissatisfaction. The allowance is given to members posted to a new location to compensate them for the turbulence associated with the posting; the entitlement is one month’s pay for married members and one-half month’s pay for single members. The amount received is therefore dependent on marital status as well as rank. Are a single member’s expenses so much less than those of someone married? Are the expenses of a Colonel so much more than those of a Corporal? Why was the allowance tied to rank?

Furthermore, the allowance is taxable! Thus, once received, a large portion is taxed back. It is added to the individual's basic pay and, because one has moved into a higher tax bracket for that year, may lead to the loss of other benefits. During our hearings we heard of individuals being given the posting allowance and then not being eligible for the child care benefit because of the increased gross income received. Rather than help ease the member's transition to a new location, the posting allowance can have the unintended consequence of simply increasing the level of frustration.

PAY

Of all the irritants expressed by CF personnel, the pay issue was the most pronounced. In addition to believing that they are not adequately compensated for the work they do, they have been particularly annoyed with the long delays in closing the salary gap with their public service equivalents.

Since the late 1960s the cornerstone of CF compensation has been comparison with the Public Service (PS). At that time, the Federal Public Service was granted the right to collective bargaining. Because the CF did not have a similar right, it was decided that Forces personnel would receive compensation and benefits comparable to that of the Public Service. The underlying principle was that compensation and benefits would be "comparable to," not "equal to" or "the same as" those of the PS. As well, the system was to provide for the recognition of factors that are unique to the military. Thus, when we speak of comparability with the Public Service, we mean **general and not absolute comparability**.

Prior to the pay freeze, imposed in 1991, CF pay studies showed that Non-Commissioned Members (NCMs) were 2.2% behind their PS counterparts and that General Service Officers (Second Lieutenant to Lieutenant-Colonel) were 0.9% behind. During the pay freeze, further study established that NCMs in fact had a total shortfall of 6.7%, including the initial shortfall of 2.2% and that General Service Officers (GSOs) had a total shortfall of 14.7%, including the initial shortfall of 0.9%. These figures were accepted by Treasury Board and a series of incremental adjustments were then made beginning in April of 1996. Thus far, these were:

For Non-Commissioned Members

- April 1996 — 2%;
- April 1997 — 1.5%;
- October 1997 — 0.6%;
- April 1998 — 1.2%.

For General Service Officers

- April 1996 — 0%;
- April 1997 — 2.4%;
- October 1997 — 1.1%;
- April 1998 — 2.4%.

Thus, NCMs are still 1.13% behind in relation to PS equivalents and GSOs 8.2%. Pay comparability adjustments do not apply and are not given to senior officers (Colonel and above).

Effective 1 April 1997 Non-Commissioned Members received an economic pay increase of 1.47% while GSOs received 1.15%. Economic pay increases are not part of the pay comparability program and are intended to mirror similar pay increases awarded to the Public Service. On 1 April 1998 NCMs and GSOs were given an economic increase of 2% and environmental allowances (field operations allowance, sea duty allowance, etc.) were increased by 3.85%. Environmental allowances are intended to provide financial compensation to CF members whose military duties involve sporadic or continuous exposure to adverse environmental conditions. They are meant to serve as an incentive to attract and keep properly motivated personnel under such conditions.

In addition to the overall pay freeze, incentive pay for Non-Commissioned Members and General Service Officers were frozen for two years (1994 and 1995). Performance pay for senior officers (Colonel / Captain (Navy) and above), all legal officers and specialist officers (Lieutenant-Colonel / Commander (Navy) and above) was not awarded for four years, 1992-1995. Incentive pay categories for NCMs and GSOs are normally applied each year. These categories allow service members, based on time in rank, to progress from the basic salary to the top salary established for that rank. There are no incentive pay categories for senior officers. Instead, the latter are eligible for performance pay. Performance pay is the only mechanism available for senior officers to progress through their salary range and is awarded annually. Performance pay is a component of the senior and specialist officers pay plan, just as incentive pay categories is part of the pay plan for NCMs and GSOs.

While all ranks have been frustrated by the problem of pay comparability, feelings were particularly acute among Non-Commissioned Members; this is understandable. Already buffeted by downsizing and the lack of promotion opportunities — which have a direct impact on pay — they found their pay frozen at a level significantly behind that of their public service equivalents. Nor were they mollified by the incremental fashion of small adjustments that were subsequently made. It is those in the lower ranks who have

disproportionately suffered from the financial hardships of low pay, increased postings, and added tasking. We therefore recommend:

1. **That the base pay gap between Non-Commissioned Members and their public service equivalents be closed no later than 1 April 1999.**

We further recommend:

2. **That the base pay gap between General Service Officers and their public service equivalents be closed by 31 December 1999.**

However, closing the comparability gap is only a partial, though necessary, solution to the provision of fair and adequate pay. If we are to retain skilled technicians, recruit good quality people, and provide CF members with a decent standard of living we will have to increase their pay. Although there is a general need for a pay increase, we believe it is especially important that a significant increase be provided for the "entry level" ranks. It is they who are increasingly coming with young families and finding it difficult to make ends meet; all too often having to turn to food banks. We therefore recommend:

3. **That, effective 1 April 1999, the pay for Privates, Second Lieutenants and Lieutenants, essentially entry level ranks, be increased by not less than 10%.**
4. **That, effective 1 April 1999, the pay for Non-Commissioned Members be increased by approximately 6%; for Captains, through and including Lieutenant Colonels, by approximately 3%; and for Colonels and above by approximately 2%.**
5. **That the Canadian Forces pay increases should then mirror the economic increases of the Public Service and be granted in a timely fashion.**

These percentages are approximations of what we perceive the needs to be. It will remain with the Department of National Defence to determine how best to implement the mechanics. For example, in order to avoid overlap of income between ranks, it may be more appropriate to use a combination of different percentages combined with increased benefits. The ultimate goal being to significantly increase the real disposable income of CF personnel, regardless of where they serve. Whatever approach is adopted, we must ensure that those at the lowest and journeyman levels be provided with a decent living wage. This is something the Department must accomplish, but, **it must not do so at the expense of training and equipment.** It is therefore imperative that the Government provide the requisite appropriation of funds in order that our goal be achieved.

THE RESERVES

The foregoing increases must, of course, apply to the Reserves whose pay is now pegged at 85% of Regular Force pay. We also welcome the introduction of the Reserve

Force Retirement Gratuity. The addition of this Gratuity to Reserve pay goes a long way in recognizing their increasingly important role. However, given that some Reservists serve alongside Regular Force members in peacekeeping operations, and that the Reserves will continue to be a vital element of the Total Force, we recommend:

- 6. That the Department of National Defence pursue initiatives to put in place a real pension plan for the Reserves and report annually to SCNDVA on the progress achieved.**

The present Gratuity is an important first step, but more needs to be done in this regard if the significant contribution of the Reserves is to be properly recognized. If corporations can put pension plans in place for part-time employees, then so can the Department of National Defence.

Of all the irritants faced by the Reserves, the problem of receiving pay in a timely fashion has proven the most pronounced. Indeed, the Committee has heard of this problem for several years now and the Department has, for several years, been telling us that “the problem is being fixed.” To date, the problem has not been fixed and while we note the intent to integrate the Reserve pay system with that of the Regular Force, we recommend:

- 7. That, in the interim, the Department of National Defence immediately rectify the current problems with the Reserve Force pay system by 31 December 1999.**
- 8. That, by 31 December 1999, as soon as practicable, a common pay system be adopted for the Regular Force and the Reserves.**

Whichever system is in use, Reservists must be paid on time, every time and receive accurate pay stubs.

THE MILITARY FACTOR

Part of the military pay package includes what is referred to as the *Military Factor* or the *X-Factor*. In 1974, the Military Factor was set at 4% of salary and was subdivided in 1981 into three distinct components that are still in effect today. The obligation to adhere to a military code of service discipline was set at 0.5% of salary. This adjustment was meant to compensate for the loss of freedom resulting from obligations such as the need for uniformity and compliance, and the absolute requirement to follow orders. Other elements are the frequent separations from families set at 1.5% of salary, and the family posting turbulence from relocations at 2%.

Needless to say, these valuations are highly subjective. However, given current realities, the separation from families factor and, in particular, the posting turbulence factor

should be increased. These were stresses consistently mentioned during our hearings. But, as a Committee we do not believe we have the requisite expertise to determine exactly what the appropriate weighting should be. This is something we will need to leave in the hands of the Department. As well, given the changing nature of deployments and the increased risks this entails, other additional, or more appropriate, factors could be worked into the overall valuation of the Military Factor. We therefore recommend:

- 9. That the Department of National Defence immediately review the Military Factor to ensure that both the criteria and the values assigned properly reflect the uniqueness of military service and that the results be reviewed by SCNDVA on an annual basis.**

OVERTIME

The total compensation formula currently stipulates that for the ranks of Lieutenant-Colonel and below the valuation for overtime be set at 4% of salary and for Non-Commissioned Members at 6%. As with the valuations assigned to the Military Factor, these are essentially subjective and not truly reflective of the extra hours CF personnel are often expected to work. Overtime is a reality of military service, but given the effects of downsizing, multiple taskings and deployments suggest that the overtime factor needs to be revisited. We therefore recommend:

- 10. That the Department of National Defence, in recognizing that overtime is a reality of military service, re-examine the valuations of the overtime factor in order that they properly reflect the workloads experienced by CF personnel and report to SCNDVA on an annual basis. The calculation for overtime should remain integrated to the total compensation formula.**

ANNUAL LEAVE

An important aspect of any pay and benefits package is annual leave. Its purpose is to afford one the opportunity to recoup and spend quality time with one's family. CF personnel have a leave entitlement of 20 days per annum for the first 5 years of service and 25 days per annum thereafter. However, there are problems with its application. Currently, members are expected to take their entire leave entitlement within the calendar year it is granted. One may only accumulate, and carry over, 5 days per year to a maximum of 25 days over the course of one's entire career. Any leave that might be accumulated over the 5-day yearly allotment must be paid out by the Commanders of Commands.

The consequence of this has been to force members to take leave during periods when it is neither convenient nor desirable for them to do so; negating the purpose for which leave policy is essentially designed. Commanders, rather than cash out leave,

designate periods when it must be taken; leaving many members in the unfortunate position of taking vacations without their families or during periods that are simply not desirable. We therefore recommend:

- 11. That, the Department of National Defence develop management practices that will allow CF members to take leave in order to meet personal and family expectations. Subject to operational requirements, designated leave periods should be mutually acceptable to commanding officers and those desiring leave. A report should be made to SCNDVA on an annual basis.**

This might simply entail allowing Commanders more flexibility with respect to leave carry over, but, whatever practice is put in place it must ensure that CF personnel can take a significant portion of their vacation leave when they deem it appropriate.

ACTING PAY

The Canadian Forces do not have a policy in place that compensates members for “acting positions.” Acting positions in the CF are those where an individual of a given rank is posted to a position of higher rank and is expected to fulfil those duties on an ongoing basis. These are positions which are in fact vacant but for which someone of the designated rank is not available. However, an acting position would not apply to a Deputy Base Commander, whose responsibility it is, from time to time, to fill in for the Base Commander when the latter is absent; nor to anyone else who might be filling a position of higher rank for only a short time. For example, if someone were filling a higher level position, because the individual normally filling that position is on a training course, this would not qualify as an acting appointment. It would, however, apply in the instance of a Corporal who is posted to a position which should, under normal circumstances, be filled by someone of the next rank level.

In the Public Service, acting pay can be given when someone fills a higher level position on only a short-term basis, and is granted after a specified number of days. Provisions for acting pay in the Public Service are then considerably more generous than in the CF. One of the principles we established at the outset was that CF members should get fair compensation for work performed. We therefore recommend:

- 12. That when an individual in the Canadian Forces is posted to a position that calls for a higher rank level, acting pay, at the higher rank level, should apply immediately.**

MESS DUES

An issue brought to our attention on several occasions was that of compulsory mess dues, which are deducted directly from an individual's pay. Many objected to the

compulsory nature of mess membership while others argued that the institution itself had become an anachronism. Because mess dues do not qualify as professional dues they cannot be made tax deductible and are seen, by some, as an unwanted drain on income; albeit a small one.

Historically, messes have been an important part of military culture. Base and unit commanders have historically had the authority to build cohesion and esprit de corps within their units. Military messes have been used to socialize new members into the traditions of military service and afforded CF personnel an avenue for leisure activities. However, younger members no longer tend to identify with them in the same way as did earlier generations, sometimes dismissing them as little more than “drinking clubs.” If the CF is going to maintain the viability of the military mess, then senior leadership will need to demonstrate its utility as a core institution to its younger members, both Officers and NCMs. We therefore recommend:

- 13. That the CF rethink within a year the current relevance of military messes with a view to demonstrating their utility, particularly to younger members. Mess dues should be tax deductible. A report should be made to SCNDVA on an annual basis.**

CFS ALERT

For Forces members, “hardship” postings need not necessarily mean deployment overseas. This is certainly the case for CFS Alert. We are therefore glad to see that the Department of National Defence has now approved a policy of 21 days leave, including travel time, for those on an attached posting of more than 4 months to Alert. Alert is now being treated more like an operational deployment similar to Bosnia, although the risk factor does not apply. Currently, those serving at CFS Alert are entitled to a special allowance upon the accumulation of six months service. However, this allowance is somewhat less generous than the Foreign Duty Allowance. Given the isolation and hardships faced, and the fact that the Department itself has now come to recognize service at Alert as an operational deployment, we recommend:

- 14. That the Special Allowance-CFS Alert be replaced by an allowance similar to that of the Foreign Duty Allowance, and that it be applicable from the date of arrival at Alert.**
- 15. That the appropriate level for the new CFS Alert allowance be significant and therefore set at rating level IV of the Post-Differential Allowance.**

MATERNITY LEAVE AND SEVERANCE PAYMENT

Insofar as women are playing an increasingly important role in all aspects of the CF we were surprised to discover that maternity leave does not qualify, as time served, for purposes of severance pay. This is a benefit enjoyed by the Public Service but, for whatever reason, has not been made available to CF personnel; a fact we find both inappropriate and discriminatory. In fact, civilian employees of the Department already have this benefit. We therefore recommend:

- 16. That the Department of National Defence immediately adopt the benefit counting maternity leave as time qualifying for severance payment.**

BI-WEEKLY PAY

An irritant for many members is the fact that they do not receive their pay on a bi-weekly basis as does the Public Service. This means that month-end budgeting can at times prove difficult. While a bi-weekly pay system would not entail extra income for service personnel it would entail an initial and significant administrative cost to the Department, especially when we take into account the "year 2000 problem." Nevertheless, we recommend:

- 17. That the Department of National Defence move to a bi-weekly pay system by 31 December 1999.**

COST-OF-LIVING ALLOWANCE

One of our principal goals is to ensure that CF personnel enjoy a similar and predictable standard of living no matter where they serve. We therefore need to stabilize the cost-of-living factor from one region to another. For example, the housing costs on the West Coast are double those found in the Atlantic provinces. While, military personnel presently receive some help to deal with high costs of living, it is not adequate. When briefed in Yellowknife, we were given a detailed example of the myriad of allowances available to members serving there. The greatest frustrations proved to be the unpredictability, largely due to taxation, of the entitlements and the complexity of the scheme.

For example, when serving in Yellowknife, CF personnel are entitled to an Isolation Allowance consisting of three components: environment, a living cost differential, and fuel and utilities. Isolated posts are selected by the Treasury Board and evaluated on the basis of population size, climate, road access, availability of commercial transportation and topography. A Cost-of-Living Differential is payable at an isolated post when prices for food and other goods and services are abnormally high in comparison with the location identified as the major source of supply for a region. The amount of living cost differential depends on the price differential, as measured by Statistics Canada, between the isolated

post and its major source of supply. Statistics Canada carries out periodic surveys of isolated posts to determine these costs. A Fuel and Utilities Differential is payable at designated isolated posts to assist employees to meet abnormally high prices for fuel and utilities caused by higher transportation costs and consumption rates imposed by the geographical location of the isolated post. The major source of supply for Yellowknife is Edmonton, Alberta. Those CF personnel living on the economy (i.e. private accommodation) in Yellowknife would be entitled to a fuel and utilities payment of \$302 monthly (taxable).

There are also three allowances available to residents in isolated postings that pertain to housing. These are: the Northern Region Deemed Housing Benefit (NRDB), the Northern Residents Deduction and the Northern Regional Special Accommodation Allowance. The NRDB is a taxable benefit reported as income by the employer in the employee's T4. In order to capture the value of any "rental subsidy," the latter is based on the difference between the "fair market value" of government accommodation (Permanent Married Quarters) and the "base shelter value" for that accommodation (the "base shelter value" usually equates to the amount paid as rent by the CF member). In Yellowknife, the NRDB benefit varies between \$600 and \$1,400 depending on the type of accommodation.

The Northern Residents Deduction is a special deduction from net income, for northern residents in respect of the deemed housing benefit that is included in their income. Residents of Yellowknife may claim a deduction from net income of \$450 on their Income Tax Return (up to a maximum of 20% of net income). The Northern Region Special Accommodation Allowance is a flat rate taxable allowance of \$450 per month. This allowance was implemented in 1988 to help offset the negative impact of the deemed housing benefit. Occupants in Yellowknife were faced with a situation in which the Northern Residents Deduction of \$450 per month was more than offset by the deemed taxable housing benefit in the order of \$800 to \$1,200 per month. In 1988, Treasury Board then approved payment of a taxable allowance in the amount of \$450 per month for all Yellowknife personnel. Neither the deduction nor the allowance are indexed for market inflation, hence upward growth in the Yellowknife market will inevitably erode the value of both the deduction and the allowance.

Finally, personnel in Yellowknife are also entitled to the Accommodation Assistance Allowance (AAA). This allowance is designed to alleviate the impact of high rents in expensive areas. Members posted to locations where local rents are 12.5% or more above the national average rents qualify to receive AAA. While Yellowknife is such an area many members are not paying the market rents on which AAA is based. Therefore, their AAA must be reduced to the amount that their actual charge exceeds the national average Permanent Married Quarters (PMQs) rent for their rank and family size. Members not paying PMQs rents that exceed the national average would not receive AAA.

The questions we might simply put are: why are there so many allowances tied to accommodation? Why have these not been rationalized into a predictable and consistent entitlement? In the next chapter we deal with the housing issue and make recommendations that we believe will properly see to the needs of CF members in this regard.

However, there still remains the problem of the varying cost-of-living at different locations. Again, what members asked for was a simple and easily understandable entitlement that would allow them to predict exactly what their disposable income would be. Taxing allowances makes this predictability difficult for many. When moving to a new location, the expectation is that, once basics have been taken care of, disposable income should be the same wherever one is posted.

We believe the best way to achieve this is to establish a cost-of-living allowance (COLA) that would apply to the different locations to which CF personnel are posted in Canada. This is an approach that has been adopted with considerable success in the United States. The new COLA would take current allowances and benefits and consolidate them into one global cost-of-living benefit. We also believe that this restructured benefit should be applied equitably to all members and should therefore not be tied to rank. After all, does it cost a Colonel in Yellowknife more to clothe and feed his/her children than it does a Corporal? The entitlement would be paid as a flat rate and given as a non-taxable cash grant; thereby ensuring equity, transparency and predictability. The methodological approach might then be to establish an appropriate basket of goods that could be used in determining the cash value of the entitlement. We therefore recommend:

18. That the Department of National Defence establish a non-taxable global Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA) to be paid to CF personnel posted at locations in Canada.

We also believe that, in light of the proposed new entitlement for CF members in Canada, it might be useful for the Department to revisit its allowances for those serving overseas with a view to bringing them in line with the COLA. We therefore recommend:

19. That the Department of National Defence adopt a similar approach, in line with the domestic COLA, to the cost-of-living entitlements for CF members serving overseas. The Department should report to SCNDVA within a year.

PAY REVIEW

Finally, we simply note that it is important we not let the pay and benefits of the CF again fall into disarray. In order to ensure that CF compensation remain fair and equitable, we recommend:

20. That the Government appoint an independent review panel, at least once every five years, to examine, and make recommendations with regard to the appropriateness of compensation and benefits provided to the Canadian Forces. The panel should report to SCNDVA.

We fully recognize that certain of our recommendations will require changes in the manner in which Treasury Board and Revenue Canada do business, so to speak. However, our military has also had to adapt itself to new realities and challenges. It is important that we not sacrifice the well-being of our military personnel to bureaucratic inertia.

CHAPTER III

THE HOUSING CRISIS

INTRODUCTION

As soon as our study began, it became quite clear that the Canadian military is facing a housing crisis. Military personnel who live on bases in single quarters or in Permanent Married Quarters (PMQs) must contend with old and deteriorating accommodations that are among the worst to be found in this country. Millions of dollars will be needed to repair or replace this housing and further delays in finding solutions will only make the problem worse. Other personnel find accommodation on their own outside of bases, but like those living in single quarters and PMQs, they have to deal with not only steadily increasing housing costs, but also dramatic differences in rents and in the price of homes from one region of the country to another. Their disposable income, not to mention their quality of life, can be significantly reduced simply because they have to move to another region.

Efforts have been made in recent years to cut costs and provide more stability for families by reducing the number of times military personnel have to move during their careers. However, the training and operational requirements of military life still make it necessary for them to move more often than most Canadians. Indeed, unlike other citizens, they have little choice as to when or where they move. When posted, they have to leave for a new base and failure to do so has important repercussions for their careers. In short, frequent moves are an inevitable part of military life, but they still generate considerable stress, especially for growing families that are uprooted again and again. When in addition to this, military personnel and their families must deal with deteriorating housing on bases and high housing costs in some regions and isolated bases, they are not surprisingly very frustrated with the situation. This report and other initiatives will not resolve every problem associated with the housing issue, but the major ones, especially those concerning housing on bases, have been clearly identified and the need now is for quick and decisive action.

IMPROVEMENTS IN SINGLE QUARTERS

The value of providing housing on bases has been the subject of debate for many years. Some maintain that because military personnel move frequently from one base to another and can be absent for long periods of time while on peacekeeping or training missions, housing must be available on bases for those who have little time to find housing in the surrounding community or who cannot afford it. Many prefer to live on a base with other members of the military in a close-knit community that can help their families if the necessity arises. Others argue that military personnel should not isolate themselves from

the rest of Canadian society by living on bases and should instead live in the surrounding community. Indeed, many in the military prefer to find their own housing in the community and provide a different environment for their families.

However, there will always be a need for some housing on the site of a base such as transient quarters for personnel during exercises or training operations lasting a few weeks or months. There are also barracks or single quarters for single members of the military who have to or prefer to live close to their units. Many of the single members in these quarters are young recruits who in most cases are new to the region to which they are posted. When they arrive at the new base, they may have little time to find rental accommodation outside the base and may have difficulty finding affordable rents in high cost regions. The problems created by the absence of single quarters, especially for Non-Commissioned Members, are already evident in places like Ottawa where all single quarters have been demolished and Toronto where they hardly meet the demand. People who would prefer to live in such quarters do not have the option to do so or must find other accommodation while waiting for space to become available. In short, there is still a need to provide single quarters on or near bases, but in a period of reductions in the defence budget, this fact can be overlooked or ignored. The Committee believes that there must be a commitment to provide single quarters, so we recommend:

21. That the Department develop and adopt a policy to ensure that personnel at all bases and major facilities have access to well-maintained single quarters. An annual progress report should be made to SCNDVA.

It is essential to properly maintain the single quarters because neglect in the past explains to a large extent the bad condition of most of the existing quarters. Some of the shortcomings have already been addressed by the construction of completely new facilities at some bases such as Edmonton and Petawawa. Although not without problems, the facilities we visited are a major improvement compared to the old single quarters still in place in Kingston and Esquimalt which by today's standards can only be called dilapidated. The Committee also toured the quarters of the cadets at the Royal Military College in Kingston where some renovations have recently been completed. However, there is still considerable work to be done not only at the College, but also at military bases across Canada to ensure that single quarters are modern, comfortable, and well maintained. Comments from personnel concerning leaky roofs and cramped space confirm the impression that some single quarters have been neglected for too long and need more than cosmetic repairs.

The disparities in the quality and condition of single quarters from one base to another should also be eliminated so that all members of the Forces can have clean, well-designed, and efficiently operated single quarters whether they are in the navy, army,

or air force. Indeed, the days when only army units were stationed on an army base or only naval personnel served on naval bases have long gone. Today, some air force personnel serve on army bases and cooks can be at a naval base one year and at an air force base the next. Personnel should have good quality accommodation no matter what kind of base they are posted to. With this in mind, the Committee recommends:

- 22. That a common standard for the design and operation of modern single quarters at all bases and stations of the Canadian Forces be established and that facilities not meeting this standard should be upgraded or replaced as soon as possible. SCNDVA should receive a progress report within a year.**

The needs, attitudes, and lifestyles of many of the residents of single quarters, especially young recruits, are in many ways different from those of people who joined three or four decades ago. The number of female members in the Forces has also increased over the years. These factors have influenced the way single quarters are designed and administered, but there are still improvements to be made. Although military life still implies some constraints, individuals expect a certain level of privacy and personal security just like any other Canadians and the design and administration of single quarters must reflect this. The Committee therefore recommends:

- 23. That departmental planners and contractors must give a high priority to the protection of the dignity, privacy, and safety of individuals in the design and administration of single quarters. SCNDVA should receive a progress report within a year.**

THE POOR CONDITION OF PERMANENT MARRIED QUARTERS (PMQs)

For other members of the Forces, especially those with families, the choice is between living on a military base in rented PMQs or off the base in accommodations they buy or rent on their own. Indeed, in 1996, the Armed Forces Council reaffirmed the principle that the Canadian Forces will ensure access to housing for all military families. At present, however, only about one-third of all military families actually choose to live on bases in PMQs. For personnel posted to isolated bases, PMQs may be the only option available while at other locations, the high costs of buying or renting housing off base, the distances between the base and neighbouring communities, or uncertainty about the length of a posting make some families opt for living in PMQs. Whatever the reasons for staying in PMQs, it is by no means a pleasant experience for most of the residents.

Committee members saw first hand the very poor condition of the PMQs during visits to military bases across Canada and heard countless horror stories from the people who live in them. We are very grateful to all the individuals who welcomed us into their PMQs and who graciously answered all our questions. Only a small sample of the PMQs were

actually visited, but the candid views of the residents both during our tours and at the meetings made the extent of the problem quite clear. The poor condition of some PMQs is obvious just from their exterior appearance, but as was pointed out by many witnesses, even those with nice exteriors are by no means in good condition inside. There were numerous complaints about the poor quality of the windows because they let the wind and often the rain in and because they offer little or no protection in freezing temperatures. Even when windows and doors are replaced with new ones, poor workmanship and bureaucratic problems sometimes resulted in little improvement.

Most of the approximately 20,000 PMQs across the country were built in the 1940s and 1950s and, except for a few cases, Treasury Board policies have not allowed the construction of new ones since the 1960s. In a majority of cases, the PMQs do not meet modern housing standards in terms of size, electrical wiring, and insulation. Some of the PMQs are very small and offer very little room for growing families. Because there is so little protection against fall and winter cold, even the smallest PMQs are difficult to heat and the residents end up with high heating bills. The heating has to be on at full blast, but many families still have trouble keeping warm. In other PMQs, like some in Halifax, the heating is good, but it is difficult to shut off once the winter months have passed. The heating problems are very troubling not only because of the uncomfortable conditions the residents have to endure, but also because of the environmental impact of such an inefficient use of heating fuels.

The lack of insulation and poor quality windows combined with leaky roofs and crumbling foundations result in damp conditions during spring and major rain storms. The resulting problems with moulds and flooded basements, besides damaging furniture and other possessions, create an unhealthy environment which is simply not acceptable in this day and age, especially for families with small children. Military personnel deployed on long and dangerous operations overseas or training exercises in Canada are understandably angry and frustrated when they return home only to find their spouses and their children dealing with unhealthy and disgraceful conditions. If only a few PMQs had flooded basements every spring or so little insulation that food can be kept in the cupboards instead of in the fridge during winter, the problem would still be significant. However, given the number of similar stories heard at bases across Canada, it is evident that the Department's entire housing portfolio is in crisis.

The poor condition of PMQs across the country is to a large extent the result of years of neglect. Priority was given to the operational requirements of the army, navy and air force and the remaining funds for the upkeep of the PMQs were often quite limited. Similar mistakes were made in other countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, but the lack of maintenance combined with our climatic conditions resulted in Canadian military housing deteriorating even more. Nevertheless, the 1994 report of the Auditor General, while noting the poor condition of the housing, recommended urgent action by

the Department of National Defence to reduce the significant operating losses due to the administration of the PMQs. The report also questioned the efficiency of having five different sections of National Defence Headquarters involved in the administration of the PMQs. The Auditor General therefore welcomed the Department's decision to establish a Special Operating Agency to take over responsibility for providing family accommodation, the Canadian Forces Housing Agency (CFHA). Before making recommendations on what to do with the housing, it is necessary to examine the role of the Agency and the rents charged for the PMQs.

THE ROLE OF THE CANADIAN FORCES HOUSING AGENCY (CFHA)

The CFHA started operating on 1 April 1996 with responsibility for the operations and maintenance of some 8,000 of the approximately 20,000 PMQs across Canada and took over all the remaining PMQs the following year. The CFHA collects the rents for the PMQs and uses this revenue to maintain the housing while ensuring that there are no operating losses. Given the condition of many PMQs, the distinction between routine maintenance and emergency patchwork is not always clear. The Agency is also responsible for the development of a housing strategy for each base, although the Agency's mandate as approved by Treasury Board currently limits action on some of the options it is considering. The task facing the CFHA is a daunting one.

While there were a number of complaints about the way some routine maintenance work is done, notably the replacement of windows, many people who live in PMQs are especially concerned about the way the Agency responds to emergency situations like flooding in the basement, the presence of rodents, and heating problems. In the past, Base Commanders responded as best as they could to problems that arose, but now, most bases have a CFHA office which responds to calls during regular office hours. After 5:00 p.m., people have to call a 1-800 number to reach the Ottawa office. Once alerted, the Ottawa office notifies its contractors on or near each base to deal with the problem.

The Committee heard differing opinions on the way the Agency deals with emergency situations. For example, military families at CFB Bagotville reported few problems with the Agency's response while individuals at CFB Valcartier a short distance away expressed frustration with the service provided after office hours. (One caller to the 1-800 line was asked where Valcartier was.) Some of the problems are possibly due to teething problems in the first months of CFHA's operations, but at some bases, the Agency may have underestimated the number or nature of emergency situations that can occur. In order for the Agency to take full advantage of the lessons learned during its first months of operation, the Committee recommends:

- 24. That the Canadian Forces Housing Agency must review its policies and its arrangements with contractors at all bases to ensure that efficient**

and appropriate repairs are made to PMQs at the earliest possible time when emergencies occur.

In a number of emergency situations, it is evident that there was a breakdown in communications between CFHA staff and PMQs residents. Given the condition of most PMQs, it is not surprising that some people become agitated when the basement floods or a floor starts to collapse. CFHA officials often felt the brunt of the anger of PMQs residents and responded professionally. In other cases, they did not appear to handle the situation well. Whatever the reasons for the delays in repairing PMQs when emergencies arise, it is important to ensure that military personnel and their families receive prompt and courteous service because, after all, they sometimes have little choice but to live in PMQs. Besides, when one spouse is away for many months on a peacekeeping or training mission, the other spouse is already preoccupied taking care of the family and should be able to get help quickly when the PMQ needs repairs. With this in mind, the Committee recommends:

25. That the Housing Agency must ensure that its officials at all bases are properly trained to provide fast and courteous service to PMQs residents, especially in emergencies.

The CFHA does face a dilemma on many bases where military units are slated to be moved or where facilities are expected to be closed in the near future. The Agency perhaps hesitates to spend too much money repairing PMQs knowing that they will be vacated or even demolished in a few years. In Edmonton, for example, the Land Forces have taken over the airbase at Namao north of the city and are leaving the original army base at Griesbach where PMQs residents voiced many complaints about the conditions of their housing. Indeed, the CFHA announced in June 1998 that it has decided to abandon the 757 PMQs in Griesbach because they are not worth repairing and is offering various options to the residents who will have to vacate in the next two to five years. In the meantime, however, people living in Griesbach and other places where dilapidated PMQs are slated to be vacated or replaced must not be left to fend for themselves, so the Committee recommends:

26. That the Housing Agency must provide adequate and efficient services, including emergency repairs, for PMQs slated or likely to be abandoned in the next few years because of the closure of a base, the transfer of military units or other reasons until alternative housing becomes available.

It would be disappointing if some of the delays in fixing the PMQs were the result of too much emphasis on eliminating the yearly operating losses and not enough on the need to have sufficient funds for maintenance and repair. While the preoccupation with operating losses is in keeping with the desire to cut government costs and to ensure good financial

management, it should be remembered that the other goal of the Agency is to improve the quality of military housing. After all, military personnel and their families pay rents for their PMQs and have every right to expect a satisfactory level of services and living conditions. However, the way PMQs rents are set is also a source of dissatisfaction.

RENTS: WHY DO THEY VARY SO MUCH?

A major portion of the revenues the Housing Agency obtains from the rents paid by PMQs residents are spent on maintenance and repairs, but the Agency does not have the only say on what rents people pay. In keeping with Treasury Board policies, the Agency must set rents for PMQs that are comparable to those in the housing market around the base, as determined by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CHMC). CMHC appraises the rental value of PMQs as if they were houses outside the base leased by private landlords, but since they are in such poor condition, their assessed value and thus the rents charged can be slightly less than for similar homes in better condition on the private market. However, this is of little comfort for people who live in or near cities like Victoria, B.C., where housing costs are among the highest in the country. Since PMQs rents must reflect local prices, they are therefore much higher at CFB Esquimalt than at CFB Halifax and many other bases. To make matters worse, PMQs rents go up whenever the local housing costs do so. As a result, many military families have to deal with not only high rents, but also frequent increases, including another one in August 1998.

Differences in the costs of housing from one region to another are a fact of life in Canada. However, for military personnel who have to move a number of times from one region to another for operational reasons rather than by choice, significant differences in PMQs rents can dramatically affect the financial well-being of their families. For example, a Corporal's family can have some disposable income in Halifax and then face economic hardship when posted to the Victoria area where rents are twice as high. To add insult to injury, the PMQs with the much higher rent might be in worse shape than the one the family just left. In a region with high housing costs, the only affordable alternative to PMQs might be rental accommodation some distance away from the base. The cost of commuting between the home and the base, including the wear and tear on the family car and sometimes the purchase of a second car, can more than offset the advantages of finding a home with lower rent off the base.

Most members of the military will, at one time or another during their careers, be posted to a region with much higher accommodation costs than others, so this is not a problem which affects only a few individuals. Indeed, the number of people affected is quite significant when family members are taken into account. However, regional differences in accommodation costs have an impact not only on the quality of life of military families, but also on Canada's military capabilities. Military personnel who constantly worry about being posted to areas with significantly higher housing costs are not in the

best frame of mind to do dangerous and demanding jobs. Others simply become fed-up seeing their families suffer economic hardships in high cost regions and leave the Forces at the first opportunity. As a result, the Forces and taxpayers do not get full advantage of the time and money invested in training these individuals.

The ideal solution is to make PMQs rents identical at every base in the country. Military personnel get the same pay and benefits regardless of which part of the country they are in and many asked the Committee why the same could not be true for their PMQs rents. However, standardizing rents has to be done carefully to avoid creating other problems. If the Housing Agency was instructed to standardize rents across the country, it could lose revenues it needs to repair and maintain the PMQs. Furthermore, if a national average was used as a benchmark to standardize rents, this might reduce the rents for personnel in high price regions, but it could also mean rent increases for those living in low cost regions where the rents are below the national average. Given the dissatisfaction with pay and the condition of the PMQs, little would be gained if the standardization of rents by the Housing Agency resulted in rent increases for a number of people.

In any case, if it collected the same PMQs rents at every base, the Housing Agency would contravene Treasury Board policy calling for the rents paid by public servants, members of the RCMP, and military personnel to be comparable to those found in the area where they are posted. It might be possible to convince Treasury Board to change its policy, but this could take months or even years and thus delay relief for military personnel and their families. Other options are available, but have drawbacks. For example, instead of having the Housing Agency standardize rents, the Department could give it a subsidy which would in effect ensure a standardized rent structure at all the bases. The subsidy would cover the gap between the PMQs rents set according to the regional housing costs and the standardized rents as determined by the Department. This would allow the Housing Agency to keep the same rent structure and revenues, but it would be up to the Department to ensure that its personnel paid the same rents no matter which base they were posted to.

However, it would be unfair to set a standard rent for PMQs residents and leave personnel who find their own rental accommodation outside bases to fend for themselves. After all, only a third of military families live on bases, so any assistance provided in order to standardize rents should be available to all personnel, whether they live on base or not. Thus, while the Department can easily give a subsidy to the Housing Agency to help people living in PMQs, providing a similar subsidy to private landlords of individuals renting accommodations off base would create complex administrative problems. In short, the simplest way to ensure that military personnel will pay the same rents throughout the country whether they live on or off a base is to give them an accommodation allowance to close the gap, if any, between the standardized rents they must pay and the ones in the region where they are serving.

Such assistance already exists in the form of the Accommodation Assistance Allowance (AAA) usually referred to as triple A. We heard many complaints about the inadequacy of triple A which only partially compensates for the higher housing costs of one region compared to another, but which, to add insult to injury, is taxable income. Triple A was created in the early 1980s precisely to help renters deal with differences in regional housing costs, but eligibility and the amounts provided are determined through a complex formula based on a weighted national average for accommodation costs as determined by CMHC and other factors, including rank. Nothing better illustrates the limitations of this formula than the fact that in some situations, individuals actually receive less triple A even when rents in their region are going up. In other words, triple A was a good idea, but the way it was implemented has significantly blunted its effectiveness.

Thus, the problems created by regional differences in housing costs can be resolved quickly and effectively simply by creating a new accommodation allowance similar to the triple A, but using a new formula. The new allowance should cover any gap between the housing costs in a region and the standardized rents determined by the Department for all the bases. Instead of using a national average, the standard rents should be determined by using the housing costs at some of the major bases like Edmonton, Valcartier, and Halifax. The benchmark should be established according to the average of the housing costs at three or four bases. As a result, military personnel renting, for example, a two-bedroom home in Halifax will pay the same rent for an equivalent home if they are posted to bases like Esquimalt where rents are higher. The new accommodation expense allowance will simply cover the difference between the standard rent and the higher rent required by the local market. The costs of providing this new accommodation expense allowance will no doubt be high. However, the Department is already spending significant amounts of money for triple A and judging from all the complaints we heard, all it is accomplishing is providing inadequate help to personnel dealing with high rents and creating considerable frustration in the process. The new allowance will cost more, but it will be more effective in dealing with the regional disparity in housing costs from one region to another and helping personnel maintain the same level of disposable income no matter where they are posted. It could be blended into the Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA) we recommend in Chapter II to provide a global cost-of-living benefit, because, after all, accommodation costs usually represent a sizeable portion of living costs. The Department can only benefit because the new allowance will improve the well-being of military families and significantly help to restore morale in the Forces. With this in mind, we recommend:

- 27. That to ensure that military personnel pay the same rents regardless of the base to which they are posted, the Accommodation Assistance Allowance should be replaced by an accommodation expense allowance to compensate for the difference, if any, between regional**

housing costs and standardized rents determined by using the average housing costs of a number of major bases.

The value of a revised accommodation expense allowance would be significantly reduced if like triple A, it was taxable. The point of the new allowance is simply to cover the difference between standard rents applied to all bases and higher rents found in some regions, so the whole purpose would be defeated if the sums were considered taxable. As a consequence, we recommend:

28. That the accommodation expense allowance should not be considered taxable income.

While most military personnel have the option of living on or outside a base, some have no choice but to live off base often in areas with high housing costs. This is the situation faced by personnel posted to Ottawa where the National Defence Headquarters are located, but where all single quarters have been demolished and some PMQs areas are slated to be sold. Some personnel in Toronto where the housing costs are very high have a similar problem because the number of PMQs and rooms available in single quarters are very limited. The new accommodation expense allowance will help military families deal with the high rents, but it should also assist single personnel, especially Non-Commissioned Members, who with limited income have to find rental accommodations in high cost areas when single quarters are not available. Indeed, the problems faced by junior rank single personnel who are posted to an area where housing costs are high and where single quarters are not even provided highlights the need for a more effective accommodation allowance than triple A. If the Department cannot provide single quarters or enough rooms to meet the demand, it must be able to help people afford accommodation.

PERMANENT MARRIED QUARTERS: A TIME TO ACT

Allowances can be changed or replaced fairly quickly, but transforming the shoddy substandard housing on bases into safe, comfortable, and environmentally efficient PMQs will take much more time and money. A number of PMQs are currently being repaired, some as a result of the complaints we heard during our visits to bases. However, there have been too many band-aid measures in the past and there is now an opportunity to find a long-term solution to the PMQs problem.

Indeed, since many of the PMQs are in such poor condition, it is questionable if it would be worthwhile to spend millions of dollars to renovate them only to produce slightly nicer but still cramped and substandard PMQs. Thus, in some situations, it may be more cost-effective simply to demolish most of the PMQs and build new ones. If old PMQs are abandoned, the Housing Agency can choose from a wide variety of options ranging from the construction of new PMQs on the site of the old units to the construction or leasing of

PMQs anywhere outside the base. As noted earlier, the Housing Agency has already decided to abandon the Griesbach PMQs at CFB Edmonton because it would be uneconomical to renovate them and is considering other options including building or leasing homes in the surrounding community. There are many other bases where similar action could be taken.

Locating PMQs outside a base in a new or existing community would have some advantages including more pleasant and quieter surroundings for the residents. The costs of repairing or modernizing the sewer system and other services now serving PMQs sites could be avoided if homes were constructed or leased off the base in an area already equipped with modern municipal services. The Housing Agency would have more flexibility since it could concentrate new PMQs in one area of a community or it could buy or lease housing here and there and offer military personnel greater choice of locale and design of homes. Military personnel might have to spend more time commuting to the base, but the members of their families could be closer to the schools and health care centres in the community. Indeed, some people living in PMQs expressed to us their concerns that some bases are too far away from nearby communities and that this often hampers the ability of young children and teenagers to participate in school, sport, and other organized activities. In short, building or leasing new PMQs outside the bases and integrating them into the surrounding communities might help to resolve more than just the housing problems.

Of course, there are bases where it would not make sense to get rid of existing PMQs. Bases in isolated regions must have PMQs because the surrounding communities are too far away or cannot support a large housing development. At other bases, some of the PMQs can be repaired and brought up to modern standards at reasonable cost while more recently built units likely only need regular maintenance. In any case, it may be necessary to keep a few PMQs on bases for personnel who cannot live too far away because of their duties or for other reasons. It might also be a good idea to use some PMQs as rented transient quarters for families staying only a short time at a base or who need some temporary accommodation for one reason or another.

In short, the situation varies so much from one base to another that we cannot arbitrarily recommend that all PMQs be rebuilt or that they all be replaced with new ones located outside bases. At some bases, it will be more cost-effective to repair existing PMQs while at others, especially those near large urban centres, all options should be considered including arrangements with developers to construct new PMQs or to lease homes already in place. Of course, it could also be possible at some bases to demolish the old PMQs and not replace them at all, leaving it up to personnel to find housing on the private market with some assistance from the Housing Agency. After all, two-thirds of the military families already find housing on their own and if a new accommodation allowance is established or if home ownership is encouraged, it might not be necessary to have

PMQs at some locations. The Committee was asked to consider, among other things, if the Department should remain committed to providing affordable housing for military families and if it should continue to provide military family housing on or near a base. Given the nature of military life and the frequent moves, it is important for the Department to ensure that suitable and affordable housing is available, but it may not always be necessary to have PMQs on or off a base in order to do this. Over the years, however, the availability of housing in the area around a base can vary so much because of the ebb and flow of the local economy and other factors, so it may be prudent to keep a certain number of PMQs instead of relying entirely on the local housing market.

Because of all these variables, a housing strategy for each base has to be developed carefully. The Housing Agency already has the mandate to do this and has the expertise required to determine the requirements of each base, the nature of the local housing market and the condition of the PMQs. Therefore, it should be up to the Agency to determine whether to renovate old PMQs or to make new ones available on or off the base, so we recommend:

29. That the Housing Agency should proceed with the task of determining the best way of providing modern and environmentally efficient Permanent Married Quarters, in consultation with Base Commanders and the Department, which should report on an annual basis to SCONDVA. The Agency should keep in mind the need to:

- a. tailor the housing to the specific requirements of each base;**
- b. select the most cost-effective option available even if this involves the construction or leasing of homes off the bases and arrangements with private developers; and**
- c. ensure that the housing remains suitable and affordable regardless of the options selected.**

If it is up to the Housing Agency to find the best solution for the PMQs situation at each base, then we must ensure that it has the tools necessary to carry out its task. The Agency must have the mandate to do whatever is necessary to construct, buy or lease PMQs if this is the way to proceed at certain bases. In order to find the most cost-effective solution, it must be able to consider all the options. If there are any constraints on the type of options it can consider, including any restriction of the construction or purchase of PMQs outside military bases, it will be hamstrung and both PMQs residents and taxpayers will miss out on an opportunity to resolve this element of the housing problem. The Housing Agency was somewhat hobbled from the start when the mandate approved by Treasury Board proved to be more restrictive than what had been proposed. We therefore recommend:

30. That the Housing Agency be given an expanded mandate in order to undertake any option it determines to be the most cost-efficient to provide housing and housing services for military bases.

If the Housing Agency determines that at some locations a large number of new PMQs must be constructed or leased while at others, major renovations of PMQs are required, it will be necessary to find the capital with which to do this or to enter in financing arrangements with private developers. Part of the financing arrangements could involve the swapping or long-term leasing of lands owned by the Department for land or services offered by developers for the construction of PMQs. Current Treasury Board policies prevent the Department of National Defence from using the funds produced by the sale of land. The Canada Lands Company handles the sale and the funds are directed to the Government's general revenues. Given the urgency of resolving the PMQs situation, it is essential for the Department of National Defence to be able to use the funds produced by the sale of land and facilities to finance the construction or leasing of PMQs. At the 19 March 1998 meeting, officials from the Treasury Board indicated that it recognized that National Defence was dealing with a serious housing problem and that it was committed to working with the Department to find creative solutions. We cannot emphasize enough how important it is for the Department to resolve its housing problems and we welcome Treasury Board's commitment to help as much as possible. However, we expect action to be taken quickly on these issues, especially when the Housing Agency's proposal, supported by a solid business case, is accepted. Indeed, an important precedent was established when the Department of Foreign Affairs won approval for the sale of some of its properties overseas and kept the funds for its budget rather than funnelling them to the Government's general revenues. We therefore recommend:

31. That the Department of National Defence be allowed to use the funds generated by the sale or long-term leasing of departmental lands and facilities or to swap land with private developers primarily to help the Canadian Forces Housing Agency finance the construction or leasing of Permanent Married Quarters.

32. That the Department be empowered to use the proceeds from the sale of capital assets primarily to help the Housing Agency finance the construction or leasing of PMQs. Indeed, we further recommend that revenues generated by the sale of departmental assets be retained by the department in order to enable it to meet other requirements as well.

The Housing Agency has to be on a sound financial footing in order to carry out its tasks effectively. Revenues from rents are used for maintaining and repairing PMQs and some of these funds can help finance the construction or leasing of new PMQs. However, these revenues may not be sufficient to cover all the costs the Housing Agency will face as

it pursues its development of a housing strategy for each base. To ensure that the Agency is on sound financial grounds as it proceeds with the planning for the repair or replacement of PMQs and the negotiation of financing arrangements for the construction or leasing of PMQs, it should have the budget necessary to carry on with its work. With this in mind, we recommend:

- 33. That the Government grant the Housing Agency a repayable low-interest loan to help it proceed with its business. The Housing Agency should obtain other revenues through long-term lease arrangements with contractors.**

Fixing or replacing PMQs will resolve most of the housing problems, but there is a related issue that the Department and the Housing Agency have to examine together with municipal and other officials. No matter how extensive the renovations made to old PMQs or the quality of newly built PMQs, the residents will understandably be unhappy if the water coming out of the taps still has a strange colour and odour. The Committee was given samples of the water from PMQs at CFB Valcartier which was anything but clear and we heard complaints about the quality of water at a number of other bases. In some places, the water may be safe to drink, but it stains clothing washed in it. The old infrastructure including conduits, which are often the source of water contamination, at some bases is at fault in some cases while at other locations, the problem is with the regional water supply. In short, there is no easy answer to the problem because of the different circumstances at each base. Nevertheless, it is a problem that must be addressed quickly and we recommend:

- 34. That the Department and the Housing Agency together with municipal officials, where necessary, coordinate their efforts to improve as quickly as possible the quality of water supplied to PMQs at bases where problems with the colour and odour have been documented.**

ENCOURAGE HOME OWNERSHIP

Military personnel who own their homes instead of renting accommodations on or off military bases also face many problems. Like other Canadian homeowners, they have to deal with the needs of growing families, the long-term financial implications of ownership, and the complexities of the real estate market. However, unlike most Canadians, they also have to move more frequently, have to sell and buy homes more often, and, not by choice, have to contend with significant differences in housing prices from one region to another. If real estate values in their region are on a downward trend when a posting comes, they may have to sell their homes at a loss. If they move to an area where homes are much more expensive, they may only be able to afford less expensive and smaller homes than the one sold at the previous location. Some may even abandon their dream of homeownership because they lost too much money on the sale of their home at the old location.

Encouraging homeownership can benefit not only military personnel, but the Department as well. If more people buy homes, the Department will have to build and maintain fewer PMQs and help a smaller number of renters deal with regional differences in housing costs. The quality of life of individuals is improved because homeownership remains a viable option to them despite their frequent moves and because with good financial planning, they will own a home when they retire from the military. Some measures are already in place to help homeowners and some improvements can help make them more effective.

The Guaranteed Home Sale Plan is a pilot project approved by Treasury Board which was adopted by a number of federal departments including National Defence a few years ago. The Committee did hear a few complaints about how it is implemented, but there is also evidence that the plan has been very helpful to many members of the military who have to sell their homes on short notice whenever they are posted. Most public servants do not have to move and deal with the vagaries of the real estate markets as often as military personnel do, so the special requirements of the latter must be taken into consideration. The pilot project is currently slated to end in March 1999, but it should be continued and perhaps made permanent at least for military personnel given the significant help it provides to them. We therefore recommend:

35. That the Guaranteed Home Sale Plan be continued beyond March 1999, at least for military personnel.

The Home Equity Assistance Program (HEAP) was established to help homeowners who have to leave an area when the real estate market is depressed. Homeowners can be reimbursed up to 90% for any difference between the price at which they sell their homes and the adjusted purchase price which includes the value of certain improvements made to the home as well as the original purchase price. To be eligible, homeowners have to demonstrate that the home prices in the area have declined by 10% or more between the time of purchase and the time of sale. This is not always easy to do because of conflicting information and other factors. Delays in determining eligibility for assistance has also been a problem and revised application procedures were introduced in 1996 to deal with this.

However, given the number of complaints we heard, the way eligibility is determined still creates problems. Some people suffered significant financial losses when they sold their homes in a depressed real estate market, but could not get assistance because the price of houses in their area dropped by only 8 or 9% or because of the way the adjusted purchase price was determined. Losing assistance because of one or two percentages is of course disappointing, but it is even more difficult to accept if people do not have confidence that their eligibility is determined fairly. Some questions were raised about the way appraisals are carried out to determine the adjusted purchase price. Two appraisals of a home are usually carried out, but the Department sometimes orders a third appraisal

when there is a significant difference in the first two. While the way appraisals are carried out should be reviewed, other factors in determining eligibility also need attention. It should be sufficient to demonstrate that the local real estate market is depressed rather than trying to determine as well if the price of homes has dropped by 10% or not. In short, procedures should be simplified and the 10% rule should be abandoned. We therefore recommend:

- 36. That the Home Equity Assistance Program be revised, notably by eliminating the 10% rule, to ensure that homeowners have access to fair and equitable assistance when, because of a new posting, they have to sell their home while the local real estate market is depressed.**

Some military personnel would not have to make use of the Guaranteed Home Sale Plan or the Home Equity Assistance Programme if they did not have to sell their homes every time they got a new posting. They might want to keep a home in one location while posted elsewhere because it is a good investment or because they wish to return there in a few years, for example, upon retirement. If the Housing Agency opts for the construction or leasing of PMQs off bases in some areas, it could assist these individuals by leasing or administering their homes and renting them as PMQs. The Housing Agency would gain extra units for its pool of PMQs and offer a choice of locales without having to build new homes. Meanwhile, owners would be able to keep a favourite home or avoid the stress of trying to sell a home on short notice or in unfavourable conditions when posted elsewhere. Of course, the Housing Agency would be free to refuse to lease a home because of its condition, location or other reasons and the number of homes individuals could lease to the Agency would be limited. However, making such a leasing arrangement possible would give homeowners another option while helping both the Housing Agency and military personnel trying to find suitable rental accommodation close to their base. Since both PMQs residents and homeowners can be helped by such an initiative, we recommend:

- 37. That a program be developed to facilitate the leasing by the Housing Agency of homes owned by military personnel for use as PMQs when homeowners are posted to another region of the country or overseas. The status of the program should be reported to SCONDVA on an annual basis.**

DEALING WITH MOVERS

Military personnel and their families move frequently and therefore have numerous encounters with moving companies. Given many of the comments we heard, the experience has not always been a pleasant one. Many complaints centred on the damage done to possessions during moves and the problems encountered trying to obtain compensation, but there was also a feeling that individuals have been more or less

abandoned by the Department of National Defence. Indeed, recent changes in the administration of moves may have simplified matters for the Department, but they have also complicated the lives of many members of the military and their families.

In the past, the Department moved a family and its possessions using a moving company under contract. Every step of the process was monitored and any claims for damages were made by the Department to the moving company. Now, the family deals directly with the moving company and is on its own to pursue damage claims. This may explain to some extent reports of indifferent movers who apparently took little care moving a family's possessions and placing them into their new home. Another complication is the fact that the people being moved must report damages in the first 24 hours after arriving at the new home.

In the hectic atmosphere of the first day moving into a new home, it is not always easy to do this quickly and in detail, especially for families with small children. Indeed, in some situations, one spouse and the children have to deal with the move while the other spouse is away on a peacekeeping or training mission. Moves are stressful events for everybody, but military families should not be burdened with additional administrative details and interminable discussions with movers on compensation. There clearly needs to be more time for individuals to report damages caused by a move. Furthermore, the Department or if necessary some other agent like, for example, the Housing Authority, should be involved in the compensation process to ensure that members of the military are fairly and quickly compensated for such damages. We therefore recommend:

- 38. That the contracts with moving companies be modified to allow much more time for individuals to report and document damages to possessions resulting from a move. These contracts should be reviewed on an annual basis.**
- 39. That the Department of National Defence or some other agent such as the Canadian Forces Housing Agency, assist members of the Forces in making claims for compensation of damages caused by movers during a move. A report to SCNDVA should be made on an annual basis.**
- 40. That the time allowed for taking possession or vacating a domicile be increased.**

POSTING ALLOWANCE

Since personnel have to move frequently because of operational or training requirements, the Department goes to great lengths to facilitate moves, including providing a posting allowance. Nevertheless, as mentioned in the chapter on pay, the posting allowance has created considerable frustration for military personnel. The

allowance compensates personnel for all the turbulence associated with postings including the move to a new region and the uprooting of families perhaps only two years after a similar upheaval. It also helps to deal with the loss of income families face when spouses have to leave their jobs in one location and face delays finding new jobs at the new one. The current posting allowance is equivalent to one month's pay for married members and one-half month's pay for single members. Since it is given according to one's pay, the allowance for a senior officer will be much more than for a Corporal. We heard many complaints about this situation which is no doubt exacerbated by the fact that the allowance is taxable.

In short, the posting allowance is not very successful in what it was designed to do, help personnel relocate and compensate them for the turbulence which accompanies postings. In some cases, the amount is too small, after taxes, to cover all the expenses related to a new posting while in others, it is large enough to put some people in a higher tax bracket. What is needed is a new posting benefit which will give all personnel an adequate amount to compensate for all the changes a new posting implies. To ensure that it is adequate, the benefit should be non-taxable. The recommendations concerning pay and the standardization of rents through the new accommodation expense allowance will improve the situation for all personnel. However, when they must move and deal with all the changes and problems this entails, they should get extra compensation through a posting benefit. With this in mind, we recommend:

- 41. That the posting allowance be replaced with a new non-taxable posting benefit which will adequately compensate all personnel for the turbulence associated with new postings. The allowance should be uniform and not tied to rank.**

CHAPTER IV THE INJURED, RETIREES, AND VETERANS

INTRODUCTION

Pay and housing have a significant impact on the quality of life of military personnel and their families, but nothing is more important for the morale and effectiveness of a military force than the quality of the care given to the injured and the support provided to the families of persons killed or injured while on duty. Most members of the military will escape injury during their careers, but they want to be reassured that if something happens, they and their families will get help. Whether they leave the Forces after a full career or prematurely after a severe injury, they also expect to be treated well as veterans and retirees. These expectations are part of the bargain they make when they volunteer to serve in the military.

Canadians join the armed forces in order to serve their country and are ready to pay the ultimate sacrifice in order to defend its territorial integrity and to help preserve international peace. During two world wars and the Korean conflict, Parliament and the Canadian people sent our sons and daughters to foreign shores to participate in Allied efforts, but in peacetime, we have also contributed military personnel to United Nations and NATO peacekeeping operations. This is not the same as sending people to fight the enemy in a full-scale war, although in recent operations such as the one in the Medak Pocket, this distinction has not always been clear. Indeed, Canadian peacekeepers have often found themselves in the middle of dangerous situations, if not open conflict, and the price has been high. Since the end of the Second World War, over 100 Canadians have died and many have been injured while carrying out peacekeeping duties. The death of Corporal James Ogilvie, at the end of August, the fifteenth Canadian soldier to die during peacekeeping duties in the former Yugoslavia, and that of Sapper Gilles Desmarais, in September, the sixteenth, demonstrate the ever-present dangers. However, many others have died or suffered injuries in Canada and abroad while training for peacekeeping operations or to maintain other military skills. While not as high as in wartime, the casualty rate of our peacetime military, notably during the peacekeeping operations of the 1990s, is by no means negligible. Indeed, the injured include individuals who have to deal with the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and many other types of stress as well as those who suffered physical wounds. Those with psychological injuries require as much care and especially understanding to recover as those injured physically.

Thus, it is all the more disturbing that our military has had so much difficulty dealing properly with the requirements of the injured and those of the families of individuals killed

or injured while on duty. The statements made to the Committee by injured personnel like Major Henwood and by those who saw their friends and comrades killed or injured in action revealed a feeling of having been abandoned if not betrayed. It is quite clear from the testimony and news reports that some of the families of individuals who were injured or killed also gained the impression that the military was uncaring and indifferent to their concerns. Military culture may explain to some extent the awkwardness and insensitivity the Forces have demonstrated in the past in these matters. The aim of much of the training and discipline associated with military service is to ensure that in combat, military personnel will carry out their missions regardless of the intensity of enemy fire and the injuries suffered by comrades beside them. However, some have forgotten that there is still room for compassion in such an environment and that it is in fact an essential component.

THE NEED TO CHANGE ATTITUDES

Indeed, one of the most important elements contributing to the morale of a modern military unit is the knowledge that the wounded will be taken care of and that the families of the dead and injured will be supported. Morale in the Canadian Forces will never be completely restored if confidence in the organization's ability to care for the injured and to support the family members of individuals killed or injured is not rebuilt. This was clearly understood by the Forces which did not wait for the Committee to finish this study before undertaking its own investigation. The issue is such an important one that we can only welcome the Department's haste in reviewing its policies and practices.

The process actually started in the spring of 1997 when the Committee first began to examine quality of life issues. Some of the questions raised at the first meetings played a role in alerting the Department to the problem. However, the main catalyst was a series of news reports concerning the disappointment if not anger of injured personnel and their families in the face of the Department's apparent indifference to their situation. Whether it was normal procedure or the result of misunderstandings, the delivery through the mail of medals earned by persons killed or injured in action confirmed in the eyes of many family members and others the military's insensitivity in such situations. Amid growing concerns about the shortcomings demonstrated by the Forces, the Acting Chief of the Defence Staff ordered the establishment of the Care of Injured Personnel and their Families Review which produced a report known as the McLellan report in September 1997. The report was made public in early 1998.

As part of its study, the review team contacted serving and former members of the Forces who had been injured as well as the families of persons killed or injured. Many of the case studies in the report confirmed the impression that the Department had lost touch with the realities faced by injured personnel and by the families. The fact that the team had difficulty identifying all the persons injured in recent years because of incomplete departmental records reinforced this sentiment. We gained our own impression of the

Department's handling of the issue during our visits to bases where injured personnel or their families told us what they had lived through and, in some cases, what they are still dealing with. Like the participants in the departmental review, these individuals shared personal information when they appeared before the Committee or sent written submissions and we gratefully acknowledge their contributions to the efforts to change attitudes and establish better policies.

Both during the departmental review and testimony before the Committee, it became quite clear that one of the major problems faced by the injured and retirees is obtaining information relevant to their cases. Pension information is complex at the best of times and can be difficult to obtain even when individuals have time to prepare carefully. When individuals suffered disabling injuries which forced retirement in mid-career, they were suddenly thrust into the complicated world of disability pensions as well as retirement benefits. Their lives were turned upside down, but when they asked the Department for help, they had to obtain information in bits and pieces from various directorates and agencies and found no single office or individual to guide them. Indeed, they had to deal with not only the Department of National Defence, but also the Department of Veterans Affairs which despite the experience gained dealing with the veterans of the world wars, had surprisingly neglected its lines of communications with the military.

The Department of National Defence tried to rectify the situation even before its review team produced its report by establishing in April 1997 the Disability Compensation Information/Advisory Cell to create a central body within the Department to provide information or at least refer individuals to the right offices. When the review team completed its report, one of its major recommendations was the reconfiguration of the Disability Compensation Information/Advisory Cell to ensure a central or one-stop answering and advocacy service for pension entitlements and the concerns of the injured, the families, and the survivors of personnel killed in action. The Department is currently proceeding with the establishment of what will be known as the Combined Centre for the Support of Injured, Retired, Veterans, and their Families (CCSiRV). The McLellan report called for the new organization to be proactive and to be staffed with personnel from the Canadian Forces, the Department of National Defence, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. It also mentioned that the organization will be linked with veterans groups such as the Royal Canadian Legion.

The Committee fully supports this and related recommendations of the McLellan report because the necessity of a central body which can provide information quickly and effectively to the injured, their families, and the survivors of members killed in action is beyond doubt. It is now important to ensure that the organization is put in place as quickly as possible and that all military personnel and their families are made aware of its services. We therefore recommend:

42. That the Combined Centre for the Support of Injured, Retirees, Veterans, and their Families be established as quickly as possible and have all the resources required to fulfil its mandate and to inform all military personnel and their families of the availability of its services.

Establishing a central information cell on disability and other pension benefits is a major step, but a structural measure by itself does not completely resolve a problem. The fact that the importance of having a central cell to help the injured and that the needs of the families in such situations took some time to be recognized suggests an attitudinal problem. The number of individuals injured during the increased tempo of peacekeeping operations perhaps underlined the need for better care of the injured, but the procedures should already have been in place. As we heard, the injured do not make outrageous demands, but simply expect a minimum of attention to their situation. Measures which should have been obvious like a hospital visit by the commanding officer shortly after someone has been injured or a telephone call informing family members of the arrival time of a military flight with an injured person on board often did not occur or only much later than they should have. These incidents demonstrated a lack of leadership and we attach considerable importance to the recommendations in the McLellan report concerning the need for training on the care of injured in leadership schools and academies and for refresher training for leaders every three years. With this in mind, we recommend:

43. That the recommendations of the McLellan report concerning the training of leaders on care of injured issues be implemented as quickly as possible and that other measures be taken to inculcate leaders on the importance of caring leadership. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

However, it may be necessary to ensure the right attitude towards the injured not only among the leaders, but also among every member of the military community. As the McLellan report states in paragraph 172, nothing was more detrimental to the chances for recovery of the injured and their feeling of self-worth than to be given the impression by their leaders and fellow members of being “damaged goods” no longer of any value to the military. Military personnel are very fit individuals who are dedicated to their task, so when they suffer debilitating injuries or develop a medical condition, they have to deal with not only the realization that their physical abilities have been reduced, but also the fact that their military career has come to a sudden end. This is even more difficult to do if the military they served so well appears to be indifferent to their plight and shunts them off to retirement or simply releases them. Efforts should be made to retain where possible injured military personnel who may have some limitations, but who because of their skills and experience, can still make a valuable contribution to the Forces.

Of course, certain realities must be faced, for in some circumstances it may simply not be possible to allow individuals to remain in the military. The reduction in the total number

of personnel in the Canadian Forces since the end of the Cold War has limited the possibilities of keeping many of the injured. When the Forces had over 100,000 personnel, some positions could be filled by injured personnel without too much difficulty. Today, however, the Regular Force is slated to go down to 60,000 personnel by 1999 as directed by the 1994 White Paper on Defence and with such a small force, every position counts. In keeping with the Department's universality principle, all members of the military must meet the high standards set for the physical fitness and stamina required to perform combat duties and individuals who no longer do so must leave the Forces. This principle means release from the military not only for personnel who are seriously incapacitated because of an injury suffered in an accident or military operation, but also for those who develop a medical condition which over time, reduces their ability to fulfil their military duties.

However, someone who is released from the military because of an injury or a medical condition can still work in the civilian sector and enjoy a rewarding career. Like other Canadians with disabilities, injured individuals released from the military may have to contend with the prejudices of some potential employers and, as a result, may experience delays in finding employment. There are notable exceptions such as Computing Devices of Canada which makes it a point to hire former military personnel, especially those who must leave the Forces because of the serious nature of their injuries. Such companies recognize that injured military personnel have experience and a variety of skills which can be put to good use in private industry. Another example is the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires which already has a mandate of hiring former members of the Forces and could offer more job opportunities to the injured and other personnel as it contemplates providing other types of services to private as well as public corporations. When someone in the military is injured and faces a sudden change of career, it would be reassuring, and therefore beneficial to their recovery, to know that corporations interested in the skills and experience offered by military personnel have been identified and can be easily contacted. Thus, while reinforcing links with companies which already recognize the importance of offering job opportunities to the injured, the Department should undertake efforts to make other companies more aware of the situation and to encourage them to consider the skills and experience such personnel can offer in their talent searches. With this in mind, we recommend:

- 44. That programs be developed to make public and private sector corporations more aware of the skills and experience offered by individuals leaving the Forces and to help facilitate their hiring of personnel who must end their military careers prematurely because of serious injuries or illness.**

Such programs should be especially helpful to individuals in their twenties and thirties with young families who cannot pursue their chosen career because of a disabling injury and suddenly face financial insecurity unless they can quickly find a new job. However,

National Defence should not rely just on these programs to help the injured find employment. The Department should also do more to prepare individuals for another career and their return to civilian life before they are actually released from the military. At present, rehabilitation training can only start once individuals have left the Forces, but the process should really start as soon as they have recovered sufficiently to start taking training. At present, many individuals stay a number of months in the Forces after an injury before all the bureaucratic paperwork for release is completed and it does not make sense for them to get rehabilitation training only upon release. We therefore recommend:

- 45. That rehabilitation training of their choosing for injured members of the Canadian Forces start six or more months before their release from the military.**

PROVIDING CARE AND INFORMATION

As well as rehabilitation training, the Forces offer a number of other programs to the injured and other personnel leaving the military to help them prepare their return to civilian life. However, the Forces cannot abandon its former members and must help them deal with injuries which may be directly or indirectly linked to their military service. For example, the most perplexing issue raised during our study was the situation faced by former and serving members of the Forces who saw service in the Persian Gulf area during the 1990-1991 conflict and who are now dealing with serious illnesses. The term Gulf War Syndrome has been used in Canada and abroad to describe the illnesses these individuals are suffering, although the use of this term is part of the major controversy around this issue on the causes and the consequences of these illnesses. The fact remains that at a number of our public meetings and in written submissions, a number of individuals who served in the Persian Gulf area described the serious health problems they have been dealing with ever since. These individuals are caught in the whole controversy surrounding the causes of these illnesses which some experts associate with exposure to chemical warfare agents or certain types of vaccines, while others dispute the claims. Medical and other experts in the United States and the United Kingdom as well as in Canada are continuing to study the health problems suffered by military personnel who served in the Persian Gulf during the conflict. Recent reports by a committee of the U.S. Senate and by the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta are the latest major studies of the issue, but these findings have by no means ended the debate.

The fact remains that a number of individuals are dealing with severe medical problems in the wake of their service in the Persian Gulf War and they and their families are also grappling with all the consequences of the abrupt ending of military careers on their financial stability. The Committee is not in a position at this time to add anything significant to the debate on the causes of the illnesses associated with the term Gulf War Syndrome. However, we are concerned about the situation many former members of the Forces find

themselves in today, especially the difficulty they face getting help. During our visits to bases, we found out about a number of cases of people dealing with serious illnesses since the Gulf War period who felt abandoned while facing the complex world of disability pensions. These individuals had to rely on the help of members of the Royal Canadian Legion and other groups who went out of their way to try to untangle the bureaucratic obstacles and obtain assistance and treatment. Nothing better illustrates the failure of the Departments of National Defence and Veterans Affairs to deal in a focused and compassionate fashion with the needs and problems of the injured than the way in which they dealt with individuals who served in the Persian Gulf conflict and who are now grappling with severe illnesses. Our recommendations as well as measures already undertaken by the Departments will hopefully improve significantly the way the problems of the injured are dealt with. However, individuals who are grappling with the types of illnesses which have as a common link service in the Gulf War need some additional help to deal with the disability pension process and to obtain information in general. National Defence and Veterans Affairs have already undertaken a number of studies on this issue and the need for a central body to provide information and assistance has been recognized. However, the Committee believes that even greater priority must be given to the establishment of a centralized and focused body, so we recommend:

46. That the Departments of National Defence and Veterans Affairs establish a single and easy to access source of assistance, research, and information to individuals suffering severe and debilitating illnesses since their service during the Persian Gulf War.

Whatever the reasons for the problems faced by individuals who served during the Persian Gulf conflict, the fact remains that during the course of their military careers, all personnel can be exposed to a wide variety of situations which can result in injuries or illnesses. Health standards in some areas of the world where Canadian military personnel serve are not as high as the ones we enjoy in this continent and the problems are often exacerbated in the aftermath of conflicts. Personnel have expressed to us their concerns about their exposure to toxic materials while carrying out their duties in various troublespots. The effects of such exposure can be felt only many years later and to facilitate the pension process as well as to ensure correct treatment, complete documentation is required. Given the wide variety of chemical matters personnel may encounter while carrying out their duties, procedures should be in place to ensure that exposure to recognized toxic materials be duly noted. We therefore recommend:

47. That guidelines be established to ensure that exposure by personnel to recognized toxic materials during military operations is properly documented.

The effects of exposure to toxic materials are often difficult to detect and it can take time to recognize the link between an incident in the past and an illness an individual is

grappling with today. The effects of stress on the physical and psychological well-being of an individual are also difficult to diagnose. People who come into contact with the individual do not always understand the relationship between the stress experienced during an incident during a military operation and the effects on behaviour and attitudes over the years. Even the individuals affected often have difficulty identifying the source of their problems and coming to grips with them. Nevertheless, they are injured like people who suffer a physical wound and need time and care to recover properly. The difficulty military forces, Canadian and otherwise, have had in dealing with personnel grappling with the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other types of stress have been well-documented elsewhere. Considerable progress has been made since the early years of this century when people dealing with PTSD were executed for desertion or cowardice, but the effects of PTSD and other types of stress are still not always understood and accepted. Although the Canadian Forces have made considerable efforts in recent years to provide assistance to people dealing with the effects of PTSD and other types of stress, we believe that the importance of the various programs involved in these efforts should be reaffirmed. The process of educating people on how to deal with individuals grappling with the effects of stress must also be reinforced.

The Canadian Forces have developed considerable expertise in helping peacekeepers deal with the effects of PTSD. In fact, they can also help members of the RCMP and other civilian police forces who have participated in quite a number of peacekeeping operations in recent years. However, there is always room for improvement and contacts with other centres of expertise should be pursued. Since the effects of stress can take years to be clearly diagnosed, there is always a danger that the needs for such programs will be downplayed, especially when other needs are competing for limited resources. For now, the need is recognized and it is reassuring to know that counsellors are available to help individuals as soon as possible when difficult situations arise, as was the case when military personnel participated in the recovery of bodies and debris following the tragic Swissair accident off the coast of Nova Scotia. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize how valuable these programs are to ensure that they will still be in place whenever they are needed in future, so we recommend:

48. That the importance of programs to assist individuals dealing with the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder and other types of stress be reaffirmed and that their funding be reinforced.

Despite the reassurances given by departmental officials, we are also concerned about the availability of PTSD programs to the numerous Reservists who participated in various peacekeeping operations in recent years. Many Reservists have accompanied Regular Force units deployed for peacekeeping operations, but when the units return to their base in Canada, the Regular Force members have easy access to the services available on base. Meanwhile, Reservists return to their home which can be quite far from

that or other bases and may not know who to turn to months and even years later when they must deal with the effects of PTSD. The fact that a number of Reservists leave the Reserves after a deployment overseas complicates the process of identifying the individuals needing assistance and determining how to provide it. Nevertheless, efforts must continue to keep in mind the needs of Reservists, so we recommend:

- 49. That the requirements of Reservists, especially those who have served on peacekeeping operations, for assistance in dealing with the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder and other types of stress be addressed as fully as possible.**

Putting in place programs to assist individuals dealing with the effects of stress as well as to improve the care of those physically injured is a necessary step. However, it is also important to ensure that well-trained medical personnel are available to care for the injured and to direct them to the specialized care they may need to deal with stress or the effects of physical injuries. During our visits to bases, we became aware of the problems faced by the Canadian Forces Medical and Dental Systems in recruiting and retaining qualified medical personnel. The growing shortage of military doctors affects both the situation at military bases across Canada and the operations abroad. Some of the issues raised by the injured who communicated their views to the team preparing the McLellan report include the fact that when injured during an operation overseas, they often spent some time in hospitals in foreign countries where they received little attention from Canadian medical and military staff. In our visits throughout Canada, personnel and their families expressed their concerns about recent changes in the medical services offered on bases and the growing shortage of doctors. The aim of the recommendations in the McLellan report and our own is to improve the care of the injured and reassure personnel, their families, and ultimately the Canadian public, that members of the Forces will be cared for attentively and with compassion if they are injured. These efforts could be undermined if the Canadian Forces Medical and Dental Systems are significantly weakened because of difficulty in recruiting and retaining doctors. With this in mind, we recommend:

- 50. That the re-engineering of the Canadian Forces Medical and Dental Systems be reviewed to ensure that future requirements will be met. Attention should also be paid to the medical requirements of military families and the problems they encounter with respect to medical insurance coverage when they move from one province to another.**

IMPROVING PROCEDURES

While some personnel may suffer severe injuries or illnesses which effectively end their military careers, others with less severe injuries or illnesses can usually return to their units after a short recovery. They receive proper care and their injury or illness is properly documented. However, during our study, we became aware of unfortunate situations

where some individuals with medical problems or slightly injured were afraid to consult doctors because they believed that this would quickly lead to their release from the military. Since the Forces were downsizing, they were concerned that any indication of a medical condition would mean losing their jobs and careers. It was suggested that some individuals suffered injuries while performing their duties, but kept this secret, thereby running the risk in later years of not only having to deal with a worsening medical condition, but also being unable to provide proper documentation of their injuries if they apply for a disability pension. This climate of fear is bad for both the individuals and the Forces as a whole. The individuals may find their health getting worse and worse because they are not getting proper care while the Forces end up with personnel who may not be as effective as expected in operational situations. Individuals should be able to report injuries when they occur without fear of other consequences so that they can obtain proper care. By the same token, leaders must have clear guidelines on when to use the CF98 administrative forms used to report injuries so that there can be complete documentation available for inquiries into accident, medical records, and, in later years, applications for disability pensions or other assistance. In some cases, leaders have not properly filled out CF98 forms or have not even used them when they should have. In fact, there have been a number of cases in recent years where individuals have been killed or seriously injured, but where the investigations have been hampered by a lack of documentation or misunderstandings of procedures. The Forces have improved procedures in these kinds of incidents in light of lessons learned, but the whole injury reporting process must be clear to leaders and personnel alike to ensure that injuries are properly reported and, where necessary, investigated. We therefore recommend:

51. That the policies governing the reporting of injuries and medical conditions be reviewed to ensure that leaders and personnel in general clearly understand the procedures and apply them in a consistent manner.

While some injured personnel will be able to remain in the Forces after recovering from their injuries, others will have to leave because of the serious nature of their injuries or illnesses. When this happens, individuals face a variety of circumstances depending on whether they have many years of service or have seen a promising career come to an early and sudden end. However, all of them have to grapple with the complexity of the disability pension application process which has caused much concern in recent years. Injured members of the Canadian Forces, just like the veterans of the two world wars and the Korean conflict, have to deal with the Department of Veterans Affairs which administers the *Pension Act*. Applications for disability pensions are considered by Veterans Affairs and appeals or requests for more benefits are considered by the Veterans Review and Appeal Board, an independent quasi-judicial agency within that Department. Despite some

improvements in recent years, the process is still a complex one and has left many injured CF members frustrated.

The trauma of a sudden disabling injury was often exacerbated by the necessity of quickly learning the requirements and procedures for applying for a disability pension. In some cases, spouses or other family members of badly injured individuals had to deal with what one witness described as a minefield of red tape, often obtaining key information only months after making the application because of bureaucratic oversights. The central information cell established by National Defence in cooperation with Veterans Affairs will help resolve some of the problems faced by people trying to find information. However, there are still many questions to resolve with regard to the timely transfer of medical and personal records. Some individuals had complete records with properly filled out CF98 forms and other documents, but still faced considerable delays in getting answers about their situations because of the time necessary to transfer personnel files from National Defence to Veterans Affairs.

The review of files by Veterans Affairs to determine eligibility for disability pensions inevitably takes some time, but it is understandably frustrating for anyone to experience long periods of uncertainty simply because of bureaucratic delays in physically transferring files from one point to another. It is especially bothersome for people who have suffered a disabling injury and suddenly face upheavals in their careers and financial situation. In the coming years, more and more records will be available in electronic format and it should be easy to transfer them from one department to another, but it will take many years to develop and perfect such a system. Measures are needed now to ensure the timely transfer of medical and other records between National Defence and Veterans Affairs. Other sources of records such as the National Archives should also be involved in discussions so that personnel files can be made available quickly for pension or other reasons. Thus, we recommend:

- 52. That the Departments of National Defence and Veterans Affairs together with other agencies develop streamlined procedures to ensure quick and effective transfer of all relevant records of personnel leaving the Forces. A report on the progress achieved should be made to SCNDVA within a year.**

Another issue related to personnel and medical records raised during our study was their availability to the individuals themselves. Some experienced long delays in obtaining them and gained the impression that they would not be made available to them. We have been assured that personnel do have access to their medical files, but that there are requirements under privacy legislation to remove references to third party comments. As a result, there can be significant delays in processing the files prior to sending them to the individuals, especially when National Defence and other agencies are already dealing with

other demands with limited resources. Nevertheless, the process making files available to the individuals involved must be expedited.

While the number and complexity of the documents required to determine eligibility for and the extent of the pension to be awarded can often be bewildering, nothing created more frustration for the injured and their families than the need for Veterans Affairs and other agencies to use their own medical examiners even though National Defence doctors had produced full medical records. As we heard in Trenton and other places, some injured personnel already examined by military doctors, may need the assistance of family members or friends to go to the medical appointments that are part of their recovery. Thus, having to see as well other doctors just to satisfy the requirements of Veterans Affairs or those of the Service Income Security Insurance Plan (SISIP) appears to be superfluous and an unnecessary burden on the patients and their families. We agree and welcome the efforts being made by Veterans Affairs to use National Defence medical records rather than requiring additional medical examinations. To ensure that progress continues in this vein, we recommend:

53. That the Departments of National Defence and Veterans Affairs and other agencies change their procedures to minimize the duplication of medical examinations and other requirements during the processing of disability pension applications. A report should be made to SCNDVA within a year.

Of course, eliminating the duplication of medical examinations at the departmental level does not limit the ability of individuals in the military to obtain another medical opinion if they consider this necessary. At present, individuals can consult other military doctors or civilian ones if they wish to get another opinion on their diagnosis. We understand that when the consultations for a second opinion are with civilian doctors, the Department covers the costs.

Accelerating the transfer of medical files and eliminating the duplication of medical examinations will not help individuals a great deal if their disability pension application still faces long delays while being processed by the Department of Veterans Affairs. This Committee was involved a few years ago in the legislative process which led to the establishment of the Veterans Review and Appeal Board, a measure designed to, among other things, speed up the processing of pension applications and appeals from veterans of the two world wars and the Korean conflict. The Department has since reported significant progress in cutting the time required to answer an application to about 6 months compared to some 18 in the past. While recognizing the progress made, we believe that it is important to shorten as much as possible the time necessary to process applications. While the veterans of the two world wars and the Korean conflict deserve a quick response, so do military personnel who must end their careers early because of injury. Thus, we recommend:

54. That the Department of Veterans Affairs pursue its vigorous actions to reduce as much as possible the time necessary to process disability pension applications and appeals. A report should be made to SCNDVA on an annual basis.

As well as speeding up the processing of disability pension applications, Veterans Affairs should also change some of the criteria under which these applications are considered. Under the *Pension Act* administered by Veterans Affairs, eligibility for a disability pension and the extent of payments may vary depending on the circumstances in which the injuries occurred. In many cases, the injured or their families must provide Veterans Affairs with evidence that an injury or disease which led to a disability or death is directly linked to military service. Benefits are determined under the *Pension Act* according to what is called the compensation principle. The situation is different for personnel deployed outside Canada to participate in peacekeeping and other multinational operations such as those during the Persian Gulf War. Almost all peacekeeping operations since 1949 and all other overseas operations have been declared Special Duty Areas. In such cases, pension benefits are determined according to the insurance principle. In other words, a disability or death resulting from service in a Special Duty Area is pensionable whether or not the cause is directly linked to military service. The insurance principle would be applied in the case of a peacekeeper injured this year in a Special Duty Area, just as it was for anyone who served in a designated theatre of operations during the Second World War. In short, just being in a Special Duty Area can mean pensionable benefits in case of injury, regardless of the circumstances, while under the compensation principle, the link between the injury and carrying out military duties must be established.

Given the risks faced by personnel in foreign countries during operations, whether they are travelling from one location to another or taking cover during an artillery barrage, there is no question that the insurance principle should be applied in Special Duty Areas. Canadians remember those who have died overseas during peacekeeping operations, but those who have suffered serious and often career-ending injuries in such operations and who need disability pension benefits must not be forgotten. Nevertheless, during our study, we became aware of the concerns of a number of personnel who often risk major injury while on duty within Canada, but who cannot get the same level of pension benefits as someone serving in a Special Duty Area overseas. While recognizing the risks involved in operations overseas, it was pointed out that deployments within the country such as those to assist Canadian authorities deal with ice storms and other emergencies involve hazardous situations which have resulted in injuries in recent years. Military personnel have always demonstrated an unflinching readiness to help Canadians deal with emergency situations, but they should not be in a disadvantageous situation if they suffer an injury during a deployment in Canada rather than in a Special Duty Area overseas. In

recognition of the risks personnel face while on duty within Canada as well as overseas, we recommend:

- 55. That legislation be amended so that deployments within Canada to deal with national and regional emergencies be designated as Special Duty Areas for disability pension purposes. Measures should also be taken to ensure that personnel who suffer major injuries while on duty in Canada have access to disability pension benefits.**

Broadening the definition of Special Duty Area to include major operations in Canada still leaves room for all personnel who have seen duty in Canada and in peacekeeping and other operations overseas to get some extra recognition for the many months spent away from home in sometimes very dangerous and difficult conditions. Quite a number of military personnel we met during our visits to the bases mentioned the fact that despite their many tours of duty in Bosnia and other world troublespots, they are not recognized as veterans. Our veterans from the two world wars and the Korean conflict richly deserve the recognition the term veteran gives them in the eye of the public as well as in pension legislation. However, some have noted that in recent years, many members of the Canadian Forces have spent almost as many months and years overseas in regions still in the grips of a conflict or barely out of them, as many of our veterans of the two world wars and Korea. Yet, when they return to Canada, they find a population enjoying peace and sometimes blissfully unaware of the risks military personnel have faced and the sacrifices they have made. This is quite different from the welcome and subsequent recognition most veterans of the two world wars and the Korean conflict have received. However, personnel who have served in Special Duty Areas should also be considered veterans since they have served their country well and have contributed to preserving national security and international peace. Many individuals have served far away from home for long periods of time in social and environmental conditions quite different from those in our country. Veteran status would be recognition that they have carried out their duties in circumstances similar to those faced by veterans of the two world wars and the Korean conflict. We therefore recommend:

- 56. That military personnel who have served in Special Duty Areas be recognized as veterans.**

Since many Reservists have served in Special Duty Areas overseas, this recognition should apply to them as well. However, in military and training operations in Canada, Reservists often carry out the same duties as Regular Force personnel and face the same dangers. We have already indicated our concerns about the availability to Reservists of programs helping personnel deal with the effects of various types of stress, but we also have some concerns about the extent to which care and information is available to injured Reservists. The problems faced by Reservists were examined in the McLellan report

which, among other things, suggested that both Reservists and Regular Force personnel do not always clearly understand what disability compensation and other benefits are available to Reservists. This can result in delays in processing applications for benefits and create unnecessary frustrations for Reservists. If they suffer injuries sometime in the future, Reservists as well as Regular Force personnel must not face the same bad experiences as the injured personnel mentioned in the McLellan report. We therefore recommend:

- 57. That programs be developed to better inform military personnel on disability compensation and other benefit entitlements for Reserve Force members. SCONDVA should receive a report on this on an annual basis.**

CHAPTER V

THE MILITARY FAMILY

INTRODUCTION

As noted in previous chapters, life in the military involves frequent moves, long periods of time away from home, and a higher risk of injury and death than for most Canadians. Members of the Canadian Forces live with these realities because they want to serve their country and have chosen this way of life. However, their families must also deal with these realities. Every time military personnel are posted to a new base, their spouses must integrate new communities and, in many cases, find new jobs while their children must adjust to new schools and leave friends behind. Often, this also means that both military personnel and their families have to adapt to a new language environment. Every time they leave for peacekeeping and other military operations or for training missions, their families have to cope as best they can with their long absences. The families, including parents and relatives of military personnel, must also live with the knowledge of the risks involved with military service. Since major events in world troublespots are broadcast live, they can actually witness their loved ones face life-threatening situations, as happened in the former Yugoslavia when Canadian peacekeepers were held hostage. In such circumstances, military families must have confidence that they can obtain information and support if and when they need them.

Support for military families should not be an afterthought. On the contrary, it is not only an important element of efforts to maintain the morale and overall quality of life of military personnel, but also a vital measure to ensure the operational effectiveness of the Canadian military. Other countries like the United States and the United Kingdom have recognized the important role family support and other quality of life measures play in ensuring the operational readiness of their military forces. They have put in place an array of measures in response to the needs of their military families such as child care and other services and continue to take new initiatives. Likewise, the Canadian military must continue to reinforce and improve the network it has developed to inform and assist military families.

After all, personnel participating in peacekeeping and other military operations or in training missions can focus on their tasks much better if they do not have to worry about how their families are coping back home. By the same token, military families will more easily accept the realities of military life if they know they have access to information and a variety of resources to help them deal with them. Accepting the realities of military life will be easier if information and access to resources are available in both official languages.

Otherwise, more and more personnel will be persuaded by their families to end their military careers and return to civilian life. Improved pay and housing will encourage people to stay in the Forces and stop the erosion of our pool of military skills and experience, but that investment will be jeopardized if it does not include revitalized family support programs, a vibrant family network and access to these resources in both official languages.

THE FAMILY NETWORK

Indeed, the family network is a prominent feature of military life. The network is composed of various elements which each have their own area of responsibility, but which can also combine their resources to meet the needs of military families. Some elements such as units and padres have traditionally played a role in helping military families integrate into new communities and deal with emergencies. Other elements are more recent in origins such as the various personnel support programs, especially the Military Family Resource Centres (MFRCs). To understand how the network works, its various elements have to be examined individually.

Individual units such as regiments, ships or air force squadrons, have always provided some support to the families of their personnel. Units can help families deal with medical emergencies, financial difficulties, and other circumstances, but they also play an important role during deployments. When an army unit deploys for many months to participate in a training or peacekeeping mission, it establishes what is called a rear party composed of the remaining members. Many units now have considerable experience with rear parties because of the frequent deployments to the former Yugoslavia and other peacekeeping operations in the 1990s. Air Force units and navy ships have similar groups called sponsor or shore elements. Although each unit may have a different approach, rear parties or support groups can help families cope with the long absence of one of the parents in a variety of ways ranging from providing snow clearing services to making regular calls to check if help is needed. These actions may appear to be of minor importance, but they can be of real value to a spouse caring for a young family while the other spouse is away from home for six or nine months. Another important role is reassuring the families by providing information on the current situation in the area where the unit is deployed and the date and time of the unit's return.

Although everyone recognizes that units have a role to play, we heard conflicting views on the effectiveness of rear parties, some families praising all the services they provide while others complained of being ignored by the units during deployments. Some units provide considerable background information to families during deployments through Internet sites and publications while others make little effort to inform and reassure the families. Some Unit Commanders attach more importance to rear parties than others, possibly because of the different experiences they have had with rear parties in the past.

This may explain to some extent the inconsistent level of support provided. In any case, the different approaches to rear parties mean that some families can enjoy a high level of support at one base and then get little help from their unit when they move to another base. This may force them to rely on other elements of the family support network which may or may not be able to respond to their needs. Since some Reservists are often deployed with Regular Force units involved in peacekeeping operations, their families may also face problems obtaining help from rear parties if their needs are not taken into account. To ensure that families can obtain a certain minimum of support regardless of the unit the military members belong to, especially during deployments, and that Unit Commanders recognize what is expected, certain standards should be established for rear parties and other support groups. There should still be room for individual approaches because both the units and the family members involved in the organization of rear parties or support groups may choose to concentrate on fulfilling some needs more than others depending on the circumstances. However, everyone should know what is expected of rear parties and support groups, so we recommend:

58. That guidelines be developed to govern the operation of rear parties and other unit support groups in order to ensure a standard level of support to families of both Regular Force and Reserve personnel during deployments of units. These measures must also take into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families. Special attention should be paid to the needs of personnel from other units deployed overseas with larger units. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

Although rear parties play an important role, they do not necessarily provide support for all military families. Some units, such as many logistics and communications units, may not have rear parties because they are too small or only deploy a few of their members at a time. In any case, military families need help not only when units deploy, but also during the rest of the time. Families may still get help from their units when they face personal, financial, or other problems, but they often have little choice but to turn to the padres on their bases.

The Chaplaincy Service has always been an important element of the Canadian military and although chaplains are mainly preoccupied with the spiritual needs of military personnel and their families, they also play a key role in helping people deal with personal problems. When families are dealing with a financial crisis, the death of a close relative, or tensions between parents and their teenagers, they often turn to the base padre for help. Padres often have a better idea than anyone else of the state of morale of military personnel and their families on a base because people confide in them and explain their problems. Presentations by padres at the bases we visited during public meetings and round-table discussions with base officials were very helpful to the Committee during our study. We

gained a better understanding not only of the current situation on bases, but also of the problems padres have faced in recent years helping families grapple with the implications of long deployments overseas and the downsizing of the military.

Indeed, the past years have been difficult for many families and padres. Families with problems turned more and more to the padres for help, but the latter and the rest of the family network were not always able to help people when they needed it because of bureaucratic delays and a lack of resources. One of the issues frequently raised by padres concerned compassionate travel for families dealing with family emergencies such as funerals for parents. Military personnel learn to live with the fact that they can be posted to bases very far from their parents and other family members and their spouses have to deal with the same reality. They often have to turn to padres for help in arranging transportation for themselves and their spouses when a parent is critically ill or dies suddenly.

Personnel on duty overseas can obtain compassionate leave as well as reimbursement for travel costs to return to the country when a parent is ill or dying. However, when people serving in Canada want to travel to other parts of the country for similar reasons, they often experience difficulties arranging such trips in a timely fashion. They can also face considerable transportation costs depending on the distances to be covered. This is less of a problem if they can make use of service flights for at least part of the distance. However, seats on service flights are not always available for compassionate travel. In the past, service flights were mainly scheduled military transport flights to destinations across Canada, but in recent years, the Department has signed contractual agreements with airlines to provide transportation for military personnel when required. When seats are available on service flights, personnel travelling for compassionate reasons can use them, but we heard many complaints about all the uncertainty involved with booking seats and about the limited availability. These problems cause a lot of frustrations for military families, not to mention the padres trying to help them. Padres are also asked to intervene in situations where personnel have difficulty obtaining compassionate leave to be by the side of parents on their deathbed and for other family emergencies. The rules for compassionate leave should be more clearly defined to ensure that Unit and Base Commanders as well as military personnel clearly understand them and that the concerns of military spouses are taken into account. By the same token, procedures for arranging transportation for compassionate reasons should be reviewed to ensure that military personnel and their families have some guarantee of being able to travel when family emergencies occur. With this in mind, we recommend:

- 59. That a clearly defined policy on compassionate leave and travel arrangements be developed to ensure that military personnel and their families can be certain of being able to travel in an appropriate fashion as soon as possible whenever family emergencies occur. When compassionate leave is requested, padres and commanding officers**

should consult on appropriate arrangements. A report to SCNDVA should be made on an annual basis.

While padres and units can provide information to families and help them deal with certain situations, they have other responsibilities and cannot spend all their time on family matters. In the 1980s, there was growing recognition that new elements had to be introduced to the family network to ensure that military families could obtain information and assistance when they needed it. As a result, Military Family Resource Centres (MFRCs) were established on military bases to give families access to information and services they may need at one time or another.

The Military Family Resource Centres are the tools through which the Department's Military Family Support Program, established in 1991, is implemented. The centres provide information and services in a number of areas including child care, emergency assistance, and volunteer programs. They also help families to integrate their new communities when they arrive in the area. The centres are non-profit organizations incorporated under provincial laws and have elected board of directors. More than half of the directors at each centre must be civilian spouses of military personnel, but the Base Commander is also a member or has a representative. Many of the services at the centres are provided through public funds, but the centres can also obtain municipal and provincial grants and undertake fund raising activities. Nevertheless, public funding remains an important part of a centre's budget and since the centre also makes use of a base's infrastructure and utilities, Base Commanders must keep in mind the centre's requirements as well as those of all the other elements on a base, including operational units.

We had the opportunity to visit resource centres on many bases and were impressed by the array of services and information provided and the dedication of the staff. Some staff members are professional counsellors hired under contract while others are volunteers. Indeed, volunteers play an important role in the administration of the centres and in the organization of activities, in keeping with the family support program's emphasis on helping people help themselves. To supplement the handbook and other publications prepared by the Military Family Support Program, volunteers at various centres have participated in the production of pamphlets and Internet sites to introduce families arriving on the bases to the surrounding communities and to provide helpful tips. Some of the employees of the centres are military spouses. Indeed, the centres are not only a source of jobs for military spouses, but also a tool to help them find jobs on or off the bases, as discussed later in this chapter.

However, we have some concerns about the ability of the centres to help all military families. All bases now have a resource centre and many locations outside of the country where a number of Canadian military families live such as Geilenkirchen, Germany, have

one. These centres no doubt meet many of the needs of families living on or close to the bases, but it is not always clear to what extent they help families living in the surrounding communities. As mentioned in the chapter on housing, only about one-third of military families live on bases, so a large segment of the families might live quite some distance away from the base itself. In some cases, this problem has been recognized. For example, at CFB Valcartier, the resource centre on the base also has a satellite centre in Sainte-Foy to serve some families living off base. At other locations, the centres run the danger of meeting mostly the needs of the families living in PMQs on bases. This is especially troublesome when there is a possibility, as mentioned in the chapter on housing, that existing PMQs on bases might be replaced in future by new or leased housing in the surrounding communities. There are advantages in having centres on bases because they can make use of base infrastructures and facilities, but there are also disadvantages. A resource centre on a base may have to compete with units and other facilities on that base for funds. At the same time, it may be located too far for many families to make significant use of its services.

Some centres on bases or near certain facilities are already grappling with the effects of their location on their presence in the military community. In Ottawa, for example, there are many military families, but no base as such. Most of the military members work at National Defence Headquarters, but except those residing in small PMQs areas with uncertain futures, families live throughout the Ottawa-Hull area. The resource centre, according to comments made during our meetings with personnel in Ottawa, has difficulty meeting the expectations of many families. Despite the efforts of its staff, the centre has had less success than some other centres in helping to integrate families into their new community because of the difficulties encountered in identifying new arrivals and contacting them. The centre has also had difficulty in getting all the funding it needs to, among other things, open satellite centres and its very existence appears to have been questioned by some in authority despite the large number of military families in the area. If a resource centre in an area with a significant military population has such difficulties, it is easy to understand why military families who live near small military facilities like the one in Debert, Nova Scotia, or in areas quite distant from the nearest base and resource centre, feel somewhat abandoned. People perhaps have the impression that all military personnel live on or very close to military bases, but a number of them, such as Regular Force members working with Reserve units, live in remote areas of the country. Their families may need information and services like those provided by resource centres, just like other military families.

These problems do not mean that resource centres are failing at their tasks. On the contrary, the establishment of a network of resource centres at bases across the country and at some locations overseas is a significant achievement carried out despite many obstacles, including the lack of recognition in some circles of the importance of such centres. However, we are concerned that the full value of this investment will not be

attained if the funding for the resource centres is not on a solid footing and if the implications of changes in housing policies and the complexion of the military community in and around bases are not fully taken into account. At some locations, the centres may be more relevant to the military community if they are situated off base. However, the site can be of little importance if the financial situation of a centre is undermined by the reduction in the availability of non-public funds if, for example, CANEX stores do not produce as much revenues as before. With this in mind, we recommend:

- 60. That the commitment to support Military Family Resource Centres be reaffirmed and that policies governing their operations be reviewed to ensure that the implications of new housing policies and the changing complexion of the military community on and off bases are taken into account. The proposed measures must also take into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families. A report should be made to SCNDVA on an annual basis.**

Just like the units and the padres, the resource centres are a key element of the family network. However, there are situations, according to the evidence we heard, where neither of the elements were able to help families or to do so in a timely fashion. Some people had the impression that they were simply referred by one element to another without necessarily finding the help they needed. At some bases, many lessons of past efforts to resolve problems have been taken into account and, as a result, solid lines of communications have been established between the resource centres and the other elements of the network. At other bases, the coordination between the various elements is not as good as it should be.

A lot of work has been done to ensure that the services provided by family resource centres across the country meet minimum standards, but the lack of coordination between the various elements of the family network can result in significant differences in the level of assistance provided to families from one base to another. The lack of coordination can also result in the duplication of efforts, something which the network cannot afford because of the limited resources available. A well-coordinated network should be able to marshal its resources to deal with a problem instead of leaving it to the families to find the best source of help. In any case, military families should be able to obtain a minimum level of support wherever they are located. This may really be possible only if there is a clear all-encompassing policy on support for military families to guide the various elements of the support network and the Department as a whole, so we recommend:

- 61. That the Canadian Forces develop a military family policy to ensure better coordination and cooperation between all the elements of the family network and to guide decisions on matters which affect the**

quality of life of military families. That this policy take into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families. A report should be made to SCNDVA on an annual basis.

POSTINGS

Better coordination between all the elements of the family network will help it deal more efficiently with the needs of military families. However, the network is sometimes called upon to deal with some problems that could have been avoided if other parts of the military apparatus paid more attention to family requirements. The Committee heard many comments about the role career managers play in deciding where military personnel are posted. The work of career managers is discussed elsewhere in this report, but the effects of their decisions on military families must also be examined here.

Any new posting has a number of implications for military personnel and their families, but some military families face more complex problems than others when they have to move from one base to another. For example, some families with children with special needs often depend on doctors and facilities in the community around a base to obtain all the care these children require. When the military member is posted to another base, the family has to develop a new network of doctors and facilities to meet the needs of the special care children. The area around the new base might not have the same level of specialists and facilities available as the previous location, and even if it does, the time required by the family to re-establish a network might have a negative impact on the condition of the child. In such a situation, military personnel may ask not to be posted to a new base or at least to be sent to an area where the required medical specialists and facilities are available.

There are many other situations where for family reasons, personnel may ask for the next posting to be delayed as much as possible or to be in specific areas. Some wish to live close to parents needing care or to the site where their child is buried while others do not want to leave an area until their children finish grade or high school. Other personnel request to be posted in certain regions instead of others because the members of their families do not have second language skills and would have great difficulty communicating and pursuing their education in regions where the second language predominates. For families where the two spouses are in the military, there are situations where one spouse lives at another base and requests to be posted to the base where the other spouse is located. The Forces have made efforts in recent years to ensure that all members of a family where the two spouses are in the military are at the same base, but they cannot guarantee this for every family because of operational and training requirements. These and other requirements also frequently prevent other personnel from getting the postings they requested or the delay they asked for. As a result, families are

understandably angry that their pleadings have fallen on the deaf ears of the career managers.

Career managers have not always dealt with family situations as well as they could have and they should be reminded that military families facing difficult situations must be treated with compassion. Too many times, we heard military families tell us that some career managers responded to their pleas by saying: "If you don't like it, leave." However, career managers are also frustrated because the guidelines they have to work with allow them little flexibility to help families. The Department has recently reiterated some existing directives to ensure that factors affecting a military family's ability to move from one region to another such as, for example, the lack of second language skills of some of its members, are taken into account by career managers. Military requirements must of course remain pre-eminent and reductions in the number of personnel in recent years leave little room to manoeuvre, but family needs cannot be ignored. In fact, under present guidelines, career managers can arrange compassionate postings, but these have such significant implications for the careers of personnel who request them that both career managers and people being considered for postings hesitate to use them.

As matters now stand, personnel who obtain a compassionate posting lose almost all chances for promotions for the duration of such a posting, two and sometimes three years. As a result, some people who really need a compassionate posting do not request one. Thus, it should not come as a surprise that there is so much frustration with this issue. On the one hand, family circumstances are taken into consideration during the posting process, but on the other, personnel feel they may be penalized if their families have special needs and require compassionate postings. Military families must have confidence that their views about postings and their requirements will be taken into account by career managers. At the same time, career managers must have more flexibility to facilitate requested postings without limiting the chances for promotion of some military personnel. This can be done by removing the implications associated with compassionate postings or by creating a new category of postings in between compassionate postings and regular ones to meet family requirements without after effects. With this in mind, we recommend:

62. That special requirements of military families such as health and education be one of the major factors taken into consideration during preparations for postings of personnel. That these requirements take into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families.
63. That posting guidelines be modified to provide career managers greater flexibility to facilitate postings for special family needs without limiting the career prospects of personnel. That posting guidelines take into

account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families.

CHILD CARE

Military readiness is usually associated with the level of training of personnel in combat units and the state of their equipment, but many other factors influence it, including the availability of child care services. It may seem strange to link something like child care to military readiness, but the most powerful armed forces in the world, those of the United States, have no hesitation to do so. In fact, the U.S. military has developed an extensive child care system which has been highly praised and identified by the U.S. government as a model for civilian child care systems in that country. The importance of child care in the military has not always been recognized, but the realities of modern military life now leave no doubt about its necessity in Canada as well. Long deployments on peacekeeping missions overseas, the necessity for the two spouses in many military families to earn incomes, and the number of single parents are among the reasons why at one time or another, military families have to make use of child care services.

At many of the bases we visited, child care services are available at the Military Family Resource Centres or at facilities operated by them. In some cases, we saw brand new facilities which have only recently opened while at some other bases like Trenton, a child care centre has been in operation for over 20 years. The level of services offered may vary from one base to another, but at least, child care services are now available at almost every base and the need for them is recognized. To what extent the need is fulfilled is another matter.

Military families are not the only families in Canada who need child care services either regularly or on occasion. However, they have to deal with some unique situations and sometimes need child care services quite different compared to those required by civilians. When one spouse is deployed outside of the country for six months for a peacekeeping operation, the other spouse may need child care services for a few hours while at work or at a medical appointment. When one spouse is overseas for six months, but the other spouse is also in the military and can be called away from home at any time of the day for base duty or to deploy to another region of Canada because of some emergency situation like the ice storm, child care services might be necessary for longer periods of time and on short notice. For single parents, the situation can be even more complicated whether they are outside the country for six months on a ship or just a few kilometres from home on a weeklong training exercise. Whatever the circumstances, military families may need child care services quite suddenly at any time of day or night.

The Military Family Resource Centres are only one source of child care services available to military families and the range of services they offer and the number of children they can deal with is limited. Since Treasury Board policies prevent the use of federal public

funds to subsidize child care costs, the services provided by the centres in this domain depend on user fees and non-public funds provided through fundraising and the revenues produced by elements of the Personnel Support Program, including CANEX stores. The centres can facilitate the provision of child care for parents participating in activities at the centre and provincially regulated child care for parents who need alternate services. A nursery school with a formal educational program is also available, but it is self-funding. If 24-hour child care is required, parents are referred to licenced and trained care givers on base or in the surrounding community. In short, child care services are available at the resources centres and similar services in the area have been identified, but the costs and the limited availability pose problems for military families.

The child care services available address at least some of the needs of military families on a routine day, but we are concerned about what happens when military personnel have to deploy on very short notice at any time of the day. For both long absences and sudden deployments, single parents and others have to turn to parents, friends, and services available outside the bases to ensure proper care. However, some of the parents, for example, may live in another province and need time to travel. It could be difficult to find appropriate child care in an emergency situation if arrangements have not been made beforehand. Given the suddenness with which deployments can occur, it would certainly be a good idea for individual families as well as for the military to make plans for child care in the event of a deployment on short notice or other emergency situations. The Committee noted with interest the comments made at one of our meetings by Ms Carolyn Becraft, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence, Personnel Support, Families and Education, from the United States, who explained that U.S. military personnel are required to prepare a plan for the care of their children in case of a deployment and must inform their commanders. This is especially important for single-parent families and families where the two spouses are in the military. The plan ensures that child care will be provided by a parent, a relative, a child care centre or through other arrangements when deployments occur. It also reassures commanders because they know that members of their units have made arrangements for child care and will not be preoccupied by family requirements when they have to deploy. We believe that this is an example which the Canadian military should follow and we therefore recommend:

- 64. That all military personnel with children be required to prepare a plan according to predetermined criteria to ensure that whenever they deploy, their child care requirements will be met.**

In return, the Forces should make the commitment of providing so many days of notice of deployment to allow personnel time to put their pre-arranged child care plan into effect. Most personnel usually know many weeks in advance that they will be deployed for many months for a peacekeeping operation and there should be enough time to implement their plan. However, when there is little or no notice of a deployment, as

happened during the ice storm when units were alerted barely a few hours before leaving their bases, and parents have no time to implement their plan, measures must be in place to ensure that children will be taken care of. This is particularly of concern for single parents and for families where the two parents are in the military. The Forces must have their own plan to provide emergency child care services or assist persons who have to make last minute arrangements when the agreed upon criteria for the pre-arranged plan is not met. We therefore recommend:

- 65. That the Department develop a plan to ensure emergency child care when military members must deploy with less notice than provided for in their child care plan submitted to their commanders. That the Department's plan take into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families. A report should be made to SCNDVA within one year.**

Ensuring child care during a deployment or during work hours is only one of the preoccupations military families have with regard to the needs of their children. Some families expressed concerns about the impact of frequent moves on children of all ages. Changing schools every two or three years, leaving behind friends, and dealing with the strains of constantly moving to new homes in different regions can take a toll on children. Indeed, these children must also deal with the fact that one of their parents is frequently absent while away on a ship, on a training exercise or in a foreign country. Some children have difficulty accepting the fact that one of their parents is not there for birthdays and other special occasions. Their reactions can be troubling for the parents who return from a deployment or a sea voyage with the hope of quickly re-establishing contact with their families. Efforts have been made by resource centres and others to provide information and assistance to help both the children and the parents deal with these realities of military life. However, more needs to be done, especially for teenagers.

Even in the United States where considerable efforts have been made in the area of child care and other types of support for military families, it is recognized that youth programs have not kept pace with their needs. We face the same situation in this country. At some of the bases we visited, some facilities have been made available to teenagers for meetings and other activities, but they are often makeshift. The teenagers of military families face the same problems as other youths, but many of them also have to contend with the isolation of the bases they live on from the surrounding communities and the activities they offer. Teenagers can use some of the sports facilities on bases, but this may not fulfil all their needs. It would be a mistake to impose on them programs which might only succeed in turning them off, but it would be just as serious to overlook the needs of teenagers, so we recommend:

- 66. That programs for teenage members of military families be given special attention in the development of family support policies. Efforts**

should be made to recognize special education needs and to encourage the development and use of programs such as the Individual Educational Plan. That these programs take into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families.

SPOUSAL EMPLOYMENT

Even with improved pay and standardized rents, two incomes will still be considered necessary by many military families to ensure financial stability. This is a reality that many other Canadians with growing families are faced with, but military life has its own set of circumstances which often makes it difficult for the spouse of someone in the military to find employment and to maintain a career. Postings every two or three years to new regions with often different economic and linguistic situations complicate job searches. Every time they have to move, many spouses start all over again in a new job, losing the seniority they acquired in the previous job. Others have to accept lower paying jobs because they cannot find employment which matches their considerable skills and experience. Many, however, cannot find jobs or do so only many months after arriving in the new location. The absence of a second income or the delays in getting one inevitably complicate a family's financial situation and can increase tensions within the family unit. In today's society, many families consider two incomes to be essential and many of the spouses not in the military, be they male or female, want to pursue meaningful careers and do satisfying work. This is not always easy to do in society in general, but it is even more difficult for military families. They already have to deal with considerable stress with each new posting because of all the problems associated with moving, registering the children in new schools and finding a new home, but the difficulties encountered by spouses trying to find a job and maintain a career add considerable frustration to the process. These difficulties have been recognized and some assistance is given, for example, for the preparation of curriculum vitae.

However, despite this assistance, many spouses find themselves in difficult situations because although they are highly qualified, their new location may be in a different province which may for certain professions require new exams to be taken and licences to be renewed. These requirements imply additional costs for military families which have just moved from another province and often present military spouses with a dilemma. They need time and money to take the exams and renew licences, but until they become qualified in their new province, they cannot get a job in their field of work. In the meantime, they may have to take jobs with lower salaries than what they would normally earn, if such jobs were available. In the end, some may decide to abandon their careers. Spouses of military personnel on postings overseas such as those at NATO headquarters and diplomatic posts face similar problems when they return to Canada because their professional qualification may have lapsed after two or three years outside the country. The

provinces should be made aware of the problems military spouses face when they have to renew professional qualifications, but pending action on their part, military families should get some assistance because of the implications of the costs for careers and financial stability. We therefore recommend:

67. That military spouses with professional qualifications be reimbursed up to 50% to alleviate costs of taking exams and renewing licences for the purpose of seeking employment when they have to move to a new province or return to Canada.

Military spouses seeking employment must also contend with the attitudes of employers who recognize their skills and experience, but reject their job applications because they will be in the region for only two or three years. The statements we heard at almost all the bases we visited leave no doubt that this type of attitude among employers exists throughout the country. Some spouses were for all intents and purposes hired by employers, only to be rejected because their address was in a PMQs area or because their curriculum vitae indicated the frequent moves that are part of military life. Everyone loses in such situations because while spouses remain unemployed or must take jobs paying less, the employers lose the opportunity of hiring qualified and reliable workers who despite their short stay, can still make a valuable contribution to the local economy. The Forces also lose because military families become frustrated while grappling with the consequences of losing a second income.

Perhaps the most unfortunate result is that military families who are committed to the service of the country and who, unlike many other Canadians, have the opportunity to live in many of its regions, are to some extent penalized because they have to move frequently. There are no easy solutions to this problem because frequent postings will remain a fact of military life and local economic conditions affect job availability in the communities around bases. Nevertheless, efforts must continue to encourage local employers to adopt a more positive attitude towards the employment of military spouses. At many bases, senior base officers and the Military Family Resource Centres have already developed close ties with local chambers of commerce and local government officials to inform them of the problems facing military spouses seeking employment. Other opportunities both on and off bases should be explored. The family resource centres already employ some military spouses and the CANEX stores and other elements of the personnel support programs also employ some. However, other types of work in the area of security, training, accommodation, and others might also be sources of employment for military spouses, both on and off bases. There are a number of organizations involved in security and other types of work with branches or offices across the country such as the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires which can play an important role in providing job opportunities.

The Corps has always been involved in finding employment for former members of the military and of the RCMP and could extend its efforts to assist spouses of military personnel

as well, especially if it diversifies the type of services it offers. The Corps already has a presence in many communities across Canada near military bases and besides having military spouses in its employ, it could help them find similar jobs when they move from one base to another. Other employers with branches in most regions of the country, like banks for example, should also be in an excellent position to assist military spouses in their employ at one location, find similar work in another. In short, there are many opportunities not only to find new sources of employment for military spouses, but also to facilitate their search for employment when they move to new locations. To ensure that these opportunities are not missed, we recommend:

- 68. That the Department develop a program to encourage greater awareness among local and national employers of the problems faced by military spouses seeking jobs and to explore opportunities to make more jobs available. A report should be made to SCNDVA on an annual basis.**

Even if employers in a community have a better attitude towards military spouses seeking employment, the latter may miss many job opportunities because they have just recently arrived in the area and are unfamiliar with the local economy and the types of skills in demand. The task of finding a job could be much easier if military spouses could get some guidance on the type of jobs available in the new community and the potential employers to contact. The resource centre in Esquimalt has a full-time employment counsellor who maintains contact with local employers and who can advise military families on employment opportunities. With the counsellor acting as a go-between, it may even be possible for employers to replace military spouses who are in their employ, but have to move, with others who have just arrived in the area. If all bases could offer employment counselling, military spouses would not only get help to find employment when they arrived at a new location, but also be reassured that they could count on similar services at the next location two or three years down the road. We believe that there is a definite requirement for employment counselling and recommend:

- 69. That all bases offer employment counselling through the Military Family Resource Centre to assist military spouses find employment. That counselling services be available in both official languages for families of military personnel.**

Employment counsellors can also play an important role as the first contact military families make with a new base and community, referring them to the other services offered by the resource centre and the family network as a whole. In fact, the first contact does not have to wait until families actually move to their new bases. The sooner military spouses can start their job search in the new location, the greater their chances of starting their new job shortly after moving. Thus, it would make sense for spouses to come to a new location

a few weeks before the move to contact the employment counsellor and start the job search. Alerted to the fact that someone with certain skills and experience will be arriving soon, the counsellor could identify and notify potential employers. Interviews with potential employers could be arranged even before the family moves. It is already possible for military families to go to the new location ahead of time to select a PMQ or to find a home or apartment in the local housing market as well as to find out what schools are available. This period of leave often called the house hunting trip presents an ideal opportunity to meet the employment counsellor, but the current limit of five days does not leave much time to select a new home, much less to start a job search and carry out interviews. The time allocated for such a trip should at least be equivalent to what is available to federal public servants, seven days, so we recommend:

- 70. That the period of leave allocated to military personnel to visit an area prior to a posting to find accommodation and make other arrangements be increased to seven days to, among other things, give more time to military spouses to start job searches.**

Whether or not a military family can visit a location prior to moving there, a military spouse may have the opportunity to contact some potential employers with the assistance of the employment counsellors and to arrange interviews. It may not always be possible to arrange to have the interviews during the house hunting trip, so a military spouse may have to travel to the new location between the house hunting trip, if there is one, and the actual move. Given the difficulties military spouses have had in finding employment when moving to a new location, they cannot afford to miss job opportunities and should be able to go to job interviews even before they arrive in the new area. The travel costs involved may cause some to hesitate to take advantage of the opportunity because of the burden it might place on family finances, so we recommend:

- 71. That in exceptional circumstances, prior to the move to a new location, military spouses be reimbursed for the reasonable costs of travel and accommodation to that area to participate in job interviews which cannot otherwise be held during the trip to find accommodation.**

Since military families move from region to region, they can often find themselves in a different linguistic environment than the one they usually operate in, something which can further complicate job searches by military spouses. When an anglophone family moves to a francophone area or a francophone family moves to an anglophone community, the military spouse may not have the linguistic skills necessary to obtain a job in that area. Many spouses eagerly participate in second language training courses offered on bases to improve their ability to communicate with the local population and their chances of finding employment, but others do not have access to such courses. Some spouses did point out to us that the courses offered do not always provide a sufficient level of linguistic

skills to communicate adequately with the local community, but many of the comments were about the unavailability of such courses. In some cases, courses do not start because there are not enough students while in others, courses are not made available to military spouses. The Army, Navy, and Air Force apparently have different rules on this. Since military spouses often need language skills to help them find employment and communicate better with the local population, they should have access to second language courses on all military bases. We therefore recommend:

- 72. That second language training policies be amended to ensure that military spouses can have access to language courses on bases when requested. A report on developments should be made to SCNDVA on an annual basis.**

ACCESS TO SERVICES IN BOTH OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Given the frequent moves their work entails, our military personnel and their families often find themselves in places where their mother tongue is not that of the surrounding majority. The Forces have an important role to play in helping them cope with this awkward situation. Through a host of programs and services, they help our military personnel integrate smoothly into their new communities. However, the situation remains less than perfect, and that is why the Committee has made a series of recommendations in this Report that will, we hope, improve matters. Future developments have not yet been defined, but it seems to us important to highlight the need for the Department and the Government to take into account the impact of Canada's linguistic reality within the Armed Forces. We therefore recommend:

- 73. That in the future, all services and programs offered by the Department of National Defence to military personnel and their families be available in both official languages.**

CHAPTER VI

TRANSITIONS

INTRODUCTION

If we are to maintain a modern and effective military, the Canadian Forces will have to be able to recruit and, in particular, retain its fair share of the best people the country has to offer. Operational readiness is, in large part, a direct consequence of well-trained quality personnel and their ability to undertake the tasks assigned to them. Personnel policies can then prove as critical an element of operational readiness as can equipment. The terms and conditions of service applied by the CF must balance the needs of the individual, both Regular and Reserve Forces, with those of the organization, and reflect the best in contemporary human resource planning.

Challenges in human resource development are significant. Gender integration, the recruitment of visible minorities in order that the Forces better reflect society at large, rank stagnation and the effects of Alternative Service Delivery (ASD) on personnel are some of the more obvious issues at hand. As is often the case with large bureaucratic institutions, the CF have tended to lurch toward change rather than embrace it enthusiastically. The military temperament tends toward the status quo. While this can often prove a strength, in the current environment it is anything but. Many of the problems now faced by CF personnel were not imposed from outside. Not everything that has gone awry can be blamed on external factors such as decreased budgets, increased deployments or downsizing. Much of the responsibility lies with senior CF leadership itself. The housing stock did not decay because of neglect on the part of occupants, our wounded would have welcomed more compassionate treatment had it been available and the needs of service families did not come upon us suddenly. Lapses in judgement can prove as significant as cuts in budgets.

However, ours is not an exercise in laying blame. As noted earlier, poor leadership, budget cuts, and problematic behaviour have contributed to the decline in the quality of life of CF personnel. At the same time, all is not as bleak as some would have us believe. While visiting our troops in Bosnia and at the various bases it was obvious that there still exists a bedrock of sound leadership upon which the future of the CF can be built. An important test of leadership is performance in an operational theatre. In Bosnia it was clear that the challenge of leadership had been met. We were left with little doubt that, at all levels, leaders were both well regarded and capable. But, leadership also needs to be effective with regard to the day-to-day activities of administration, personnel support, career management, etc. Good leadership must be consistent throughout the chain of command

and effective with respect to all responsibilities assumed. There was a perception, amongst CF personnel, that leaders above the level of Field Commanders were out of touch with their real needs and aspirations.

Military discipline dictates that lawful orders must be followed. Yet, while this principle cannot be a matter for debate, orders based on clear and understandable reasons will prove more effective than those whose rationale troops are merely expected to assume. Deference to authority is not as much a part of our society as it once was, and those coming to the military bring with them the cynicism and suspicion of authority that underlies much of today's civic culture. This is something with which the CF must come to terms.

A mundane example of how not to do things is the manner in which the "new alcohol policy," for troops serving in an operational theatre, was announced. It was presented as an edict from on high with no need of explanation. The response from the troops was, "don't insult us and don't treat us like children. Why must we all be made to suffer for the transgressions of an isolated few?" Indeed, many said that they did not so much mind the policy as the way it was instituted. The current policy is a significant irritant for many. Therefore, we recommend:

74. That the Canadian Forces re-examine the current relevancy of its alcohol policy and consider deleting it entirely.

In discussions of leadership we must also bear in mind that Commanders have fewer options with regard to decision making than they once did. A smaller force with fewer resources means that senior leadership is having to make choices between competing goods and not just between different means for achieving a desired end. The choice between spending resources on base infrastructure rather than on training or equipment, may in fact not be a choice at all. Operational readiness dictates that the latter come first, even though the former may prove a better boost for morale.

Leadership must be based on mutual respect between, and among, officers and Non-Commissioned Members. Leadership, at all levels, must take the concerns and aspirations of their people seriously. Good leadership is leadership that listens and that moves its members ahead, at least in part, on the basis of what it has learned from the rank and file. It is a two-way process.

CAREER MANAGERS

Throughout our hearings consistent concerns were expressed with regard to the system of career management and, in particular, with regard to career managers themselves. Many felt that their personal aspirations and needs were not adequately reflected in the decisions made by career managers. All CF members are assigned a career manager whose responsibility it is to monitor the individual's progress and make

decisions with respect to postings. In order to be considered for promotion, individuals are expected to go through their requisite training, meet a minimum qualifying time, and are evaluated according to criteria based on a combination of performance and potential.

To remain competitive for promotion and employment, individuals must often move to different locations in order to obtain the necessary training and experience. Coupled with the increase in operational tempo, this means that even a limited form of stability can be difficult to achieve. For dual service couples, where each is required periodically to relocate, matters can prove especially frustrating. CF personnel recognize that relocation is a fact of military life, but, at the same time, many also believe that career managers do not do enough to try and reduce the frequency of moves or to take personal needs into account.

However, it is not merely the frequency of moves that is the irritant, but also the shortness of official notice given. All too often members are given only a few months, or less, notice before a new posting. This problem was pointed to frequently and, if we are to remedy it, the CF should consider adopting a longer planning cycle. Career managers must be given the tools with which to manage.

A longer planning cycle could help in ensuring that individuals be given between 6 to 12 months notice of their next posting. Such predictability would do much to alleviate both individual and family stress and permit members and their families to plan properly for their next location. Needless to say, this time frame would not apply for operational deployments. Currently, the CF operates on a 12-month planning cycle which seems to mitigate against being able to provide for greater notice. The adoption of a longer planning cycle will necessarily entail a re-examination of certain standard practices like the frequency of promotion boards. These practices can be adjusted. Thus, in order to enable CF personnel to better plan their relocations and to help alleviate individual and family stress, caused by frequent short-notice moves, we recommend:

- 75. That the Department of National Defence examine the feasibility of adopting a longer planning cycle whereby members could be given greater notice of their next posting. A report should be made to SCNDVA on an annual basis.**

A further concern expressed involved the relationship between service members and career managers. Some felt that career managers lacked any true interest in their personal aspirations because the position was simply another rotational posting. As well, several witnesses complained about the fact that when they did speak with career managers they could not do so privately. Finally, there was also a degree of frustration expressed over the fact that career managers were stationed in Ottawa and not on individual bases, making them seem like little more than faceless bureaucrats. It is important for CF personnel to have confidence in the career management system. It is especially important that they

have confidence in those administering the system and their personal careers. Even sound advice, coming from an untrusted source, may not be well regarded.

CF personnel should, when they believe it necessary, be able to have conversations with career managers that are private and confidential. It is also important that there be some continuity in the career managers with whom one is dealing. If managers are changed too frequently it becomes difficult to build a sense of mutual trust.

At the same time, the role of career manager is neither an easy nor simple one. Those newly rotated into the position need time to familiarize themselves with a myriad of CF personnel policies; few of which are self-explanatory. It also takes time to develop confidence and expertise in any new position. Unfortunately, once career managers reach this point there is a good chance that they will be in line for their next posting. Matters are further confounded by the fact that the number of career managers has been significantly cut, with further reductions still to come. This, in itself, has not made it any easier to manage and explain the various aspects of downsizing and change.

If the career management system is to work it will need to be adequately staffed with individuals who have a thorough knowledge of the military and its personnel policies. And, CF members will need to be able to use it with confidence and an appropriate degree of privacy. We therefore recommend:

76. That CF personnel be able to have reasonable access to consult directly and privately with their career managers. That this measure take into account the need for military personnel to have access to service in the official language of their choice.

Given that reduction in career managers is largely related to budgetary restraint, it might be useful for the Department to look at other staffing options. We believe it is imperative that adequate staffing levels in this area be maintained. If this cannot be done by using regular CF personnel, then we should consider the option of partially privatizing the career management function. By this we do not mean giving it over to a private agency. Rather, we suggest that individuals with a thorough knowledge of the military personnel system be hired, on a contract basis, to help buttress the regular contingent of career managers. Such contracts could be of a relatively long-term nature, in order to ensure continuity, and could be offered on either a full or part-time basis. However, the Department must ensure that the contracting option is cost effective and is less expensive than using regular CF personnel only. We find it incongruous that, during a period of such dramatic change and restructuring, the very component of CF administration which can most directly affect the lives of personnel is being so dramatically downsized. An inadequate career management contingent will only further exacerbate frustrations already felt. In order to ensure that career management be an effective element of human resource development we recommend:

- 77. That the Canadian Forces ensure that the career management component remain adequately staffed, to meet both human resources and operational requirements.**

ALTERNATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

While the main focus of our undertaking was clearly CF personnel, during the course of our hearings we came to realize that Alternative Service Delivery is having a significant effect on civilian employees. We therefore deemed it important to offer comment.

Of all the programs recently initiated by the Department of National Defence, that of Alternative Service Delivery (ASD) has raised the most concerns. This comes as no surprise for the livelihood of a large number of CF personnel as well as DND civilian employees has been and will continue to be affected by ASD. Some of our witnesses were upset over the fact that, although they had proven themselves very efficient in highly technical work, their trade was still contracted out. Others were disappointed because their in-house bids, after much preparation, were not accepted. Individuals felt themselves particularly disadvantaged in the bidding process because they had to prepare their submissions on their own time — after hours and on weekends. While they often received help and encouragement from their Commanders, the fact that they entered the process as complete amateurs did not, in their opinion, make for a level playing field.

The Department instituted the ASD program in July 1995 in response to significant budget cuts and the need to make its operations more efficient while maintaining military capabilities. The 1996 federal budget announced the ASD plan which identified the first activities under consideration for ASD such as base and unit support at Goose Bay and Kingston, food services, second and third-line maintenance (such as the Aerospace Engineering Test Establishment in Cold Lake), and NATO Flying Training. Many of these activities have already been transferred to contractors or are in the advanced stages of the process. In October and November of 1997, the Department's Defence Management Committee (DMC) decided that ASD reviews should be undertaken of the department-wide supply and distribution system and site support services at seven locations. A number of bases were identified for review. As part of these reviews, consultations are held to confirm if contracting in fact offers savings and other benefits to the Department. Thereafter, industry and in-house teams will be given time to submit proposals. The reviews will take about two years.

The Department believes that ASD is a necessary element of restructuring, and that significant savings can be made. For example, it is claimed that the contract awarded to Serco Facilities Management Inc. for the support services at CFB Goose Bay will save approximately \$22 million in 1998 and will produce similar savings in following years. It is also claimed that, given reduced costs, foreign militaries will be more inclined to use facilities such as those at CFB Goose Bay and CFB Moose Jaw.

From the perspective of those directly affected, reviews were somewhat more mixed. At first, the Serco contract at Goose Bay left many with significantly reduced wages and concerns about their long-term future. The contract called for 225 of the affected civilian personnel or more than 70% of the new workforce to receive job offers from the contractor while those who did not receive job offers were to be offered various options by the Department. However, because of complaints about the manner in which the contract was implemented — salary cuts, different job assignments, reductions in benefits, etc. — the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Veterans Affairs announced, on 13 March 1998, a number of measures to meet the concerns of the employees. These included the awarding of a transitional allowance to some of the affected employees, a review by Serco of the salaries it was offering to employees and an extension of the period employees could stay in married quarters. On the other hand, there are also positive examples of ASD. At CFB Trenton, the food services were improved when an in-house bid by employees won the contract in late 1997. When we visited Trenton, there was some misunderstanding of the pricing policy, which, however, was subsequently cleared up. Care must always be taken that ASD solutions are not achieved by undermining the quality of life of serving members.

In the final analysis, the one thing that proved most disconcerting to personnel was the uncertainty they were facing. If the Department of National Defence is to continue with ASD it must see to the human resource needs of its members. Affected personnel need to be informed as early as possible in order that they be able to prepare in-house bids and they must be able to do so from a position that does not unduly disadvantage them. The Department must allow them the necessary time and resources with which to prepare themselves. In cases of job loss or mandated relocation, an inevitable consequence of any major restructuring, compensation or benefit packages and help with transition to new locations or careers must be fair. We therefore recommend:

- 78. That as soon as ASD is being considered, those affected be informed and consulted.**
- 79. That those wishing to make an in-house bid be provided with adequate time and resources to ensure that their bid is professional and competitive. Personnel should be given a realistic chance to prepare bids.**
- 80. That when job cuts or mandated relocations are an inevitable consequence of the introduction of ASD, those affected be provided with compensation and benefits.**

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

If the Canadian Forces are to remain a profession of choice, they will need to make a firm commitment to lifelong learning. Preferred recruits will be more likely to join if they

believe that the CF will aid in providing them with the requisite skills necessary for a smooth transition to civilian life. Not all recruits will want to make a lifelong commitment, and even those who do may find their military career coming to an end when they still have many productive working years left. The nature of service and the need to be able to recruit young talent, on a continuing basis, means that many will have relatively short careers with the CF. To develop greater professionalism, adequate support must be extended to an increasing number of personnel for professional and technical qualifications. It is also important that the skills acquired, while in the military, be accredited and transferable to the private sector.

The CF has in place a Second Career Assistance Network (SCAN) and an Educational Upgrading Program. Canadian Forces personnel including Class B and C Reservists, with a minimum of three years service, are offered career and personal transition services. These services are offered through SCAN and delivered by personnel selection officers at each base/wing. The purpose of the program is to assist military personnel in planning, preparing, and achieving their personal and professional transition to the civilian sector. Transition services include: individual counselling (career, educational, personal), seminars and workshops, vocational assessment, aptitude testing, resume assistance and preparation, job search and interview techniques, employment referrals, financial planning, and publications and reference material. While the program seems fairly comprehensive it is only available during a member's last five years of service. Transition planning is not something that should be left to the tail end of one's military career, it must be given consideration earlier on. We therefore recommend:

- 81. That the Second Career Assistance Network be made available to CF personnel at an earlier date in their careers and that funding be sustained in order to ensure its effectiveness. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.**

With respect to educational upgrading and second career training, available throughout one's service, CF personnel including Class B and C Reservists are entitled to a 50% reimbursement for tuition fees and books when pursuing academic training provided they successfully complete the courses taken. Academic upgrading and training ranges from secondary school to post-graduate studies. This is an annual entitlement which is based on the academic year in which the course or training commenced. Military personnel are also entitled to 50% reimbursement for training in preparation for second career purposes. Such training may involve qualification and certification courses and examinations required by a member to gain professional or trade recognition for employment in a non-military environment.

These benefits are significant, but again there may be room for improvement. For example, the Educational Upgrading Program includes the University Training Program

for Officers (UTPO). The UTPO is a DND-sponsored plan open to commissioned officers, under the rank of lieutenant-colonel, who are in a position to complete their first baccalaureate degree within approximately 16 months. An officer selected for the UTPO is eligible to receive “normal pay and allowances and other financial entitlements, including those for the movement of dependants, furniture and effects as authorized by National Defence Headquarters.” Courses under the program may be taken at either the Royal Military College or a recognized Canadian university. Members may also apply to take their courses while on leave without pay.

We were told that in 1997 only 10 undergraduate, or UTPO positions were made available. At the same time there were 50 post-graduate funded positions. In 1998 there were 110 applicants for 10 available UTPO positions, a significant increase over the previous year when there were only 57 applicants. Interest in post-secondary education is on the rise and it is therefore important that we try and increase access. During our visit to the Royal Military College we were particularly impressed with their Distant Education Program and believe it to be something positive upon which to build further. Insofar as higher education is important both for the development of leadership skills and in easing the eventual transition to civilian life, we recommend:

82. That the Canadian Forces give consideration to increasing the number of UTPO positions made available each year and consider expanding the Royal Military College’s Distant Education Program. A report should be made to SCNDVA on an annual basis.

We also believe that higher learning should not be limited to the “higher-ups”. Non-Commissioned Members can also have significant leadership responsibilities and may want to take university training and remain at their rank level, or take it in the hope of future promotion. University education for NCMS should not necessarily be viewed as an officer development program, as is the case with the University Training Plan for Officers, but rather as part of their lifelong learning experience.

We therefore recommend:

83. That the Canadian Forces facilitate increased access to academic upgrading for Non-Commissioned Members, to meet personal as well as military requirements.

CF personnel receive much in the way of technical and skills training throughout their careers. During our hearings we were told of the frustrations felt by many over the fact that their training, even when taken at civilian locations, was not later recognized by civilian or public sector employers. It is important that equivalencies between military and civilian training be properly recognized. CF members must be given proper recognition for their civilian training and appropriate civilian accreditation for military training. We therefore recommend:

84. That the Department of National Defence increase its efforts to facilitate the provision of appropriate civilian accreditation to military personnel for their military training and appropriate recognition for their civilian training.

The Canadian military is a repository of skills and talents that are relevant to much of the private and public work environments. Some employers recognize this, others do not. In order to see to the long-term well-being of its personnel, it is important that the CF expand the development of relationships with those in the private and public sectors, who could prove to be prospective employers.

Generally, a sound career development program should provide individuals with:

- a high degree of competence in key skills;
- the opportunity to gain recognized and transferable qualifications;
- funding for learning activities;
- access to information, advice and modern learning facilities, irrespective of rank or age;
- the ability to return to the civilian workplace with added value.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Over time the composition of the CF will inevitably change as it continues to recruit more women and members from visible minority groups. In this respect, it will become more reflective of the changing nature of Canadian society as a whole. Such transitions are never easy.

The number of women in the Canadian Forces has increased from a total ceiling of 1,500 in 1971 to approximately 6,800 today; representing more than 10.8% of the Regular Force. Women represent approximately 20% of the Primary Reserve strength. Today women can serve in all occupations of the CF except for submarine duty.

The Forces have also recently engaged in an active recruiting campaign intended to attract more women into the combat arms. The army has requested that 25% of those recruited to combat arms be women, in order to obtain a critical mass for training and employment in various units. Women and men undergo the same integrated training, must meet the same academic standards and are eligible for the same career opportunities.

The fact that women are now “guaranteed” equal access and treatment is itself the consequence of changing societal norms. In this regard the military responded positively

to standards set by other agencies. The 1,500 ceiling was removed in 1971 on the basis of recommendations put forward by the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. The departmental review of the Commission's findings also led to the gradual expansion of women's employment opportunities into non-traditional areas such as vehicle drivers and mechanics, aircraft mechanics, air-traffic controllers, military police and fire fighters.

Personnel policies were further reviewed in 1978 and 1985, after the passing of the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and the constitutional entrenchment of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. As a result, women gained the right to serve at sea in replenishment ships and in a diving tender, with the army service battalions, in military police platoons and field ambulance units and in all air squadrons. Finally, in 1989 a Human Rights Tribunal decision directed the Canadian Forces to remove any remaining employment restrictions based on sex; the only exception being submarine duty.

While we applaud the full integration of women into the CF we also realize that the transition has not been an easy one. Publicized stories of sexual harassment and other forms of unacceptable behaviour and abuse of authority confirm this. During our hearings we were certainly made aware of the fact that women have not always been made to feel welcome as full and equal participants.

The CF have a zero tolerance policy with respect to sexual harassment and racism. In order to ensure its effectiveness a complaints procedure has been put in place. Any member who is a victim of any form of harassment, including racial harassment, is encouraged to report it to the chain of command. If the individual is uncomfortable going to the chain of command, alternate mechanisms are available. These include the harassment 1-800 number, the National Investigation Service, or the Ombudsman's Office. As well every member must take a harassment sensitization course (Standard for Harassment and Racism Prevention).

In the final analysis, those coming to the Canadian Forces must feel confident in the knowledge that the safety and integrity of their "person" will be respected. We cannot tolerate an atmosphere wherein women and visible minorities feel themselves to be anything but full and equal participants. We were struck by the seriousness of what we heard and therefore recommend:

- 85. That the Canadian Forces intensify their efforts in ensuring that all military members are aware of what constitutes a poisoned work environment for women and visible minorities and what constitutes harassment. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.**
- 86. That the Canadian Forces continue to emphasize and make known to all members the serious nature and consequences of not respecting harassment and discrimination policies. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.**

Having mechanisms in place is an important first step. However, unless their efficacy is clearly demonstrated, victims will not turn to them with any degree of confidence.

CLOTHING

Good kit has always been an important element of a soldier's life. Comfortable and well-fitting uniforms and environmental clothing are a necessity. We heard many stories of ill-fitting and uncomfortable kit: boots that were either ill-fitting or not suited to the activities undertaken, lack of certain items and long delays in acquisition.

The Clothe the Soldier Program is addressing many of these concerns for the military, and women's uniforms are being adjusted so that they better meet the needs of female members. However, we should not again fall into a situation where supply shortfalls create undue frustration. The design and acquisition of new clothing takes time and there will be occasions, like the new kit for the infantry, when delays are inevitable. But, these should be rare occasions. We therefore recommend:

- 87. That the Department of National Defence make every effort to ensure that, in future, there be no supply problems with respect to proper fitting and issuance of clothing and personal kit. Uniforms, environmental clothing, and specialized kit such as boots for tank crews must be suitable for the work and training undertaken and be issued when required. A report should be made to SCNDVA on an annual basis.**

THE FUTURE

In order to provide a framework for addressing the various problems and changes faced by the CF, we will need to put in place a comprehensive human resources policy. This policy must:

- always ensure that operational requirements are met;
- incorporate what is best in current practice;
- provide jobs that are rewarding and challenging;
- allow the CF to recruit, retain and motivate quality people by offering them a fair and equitable pay and benefits package which recognizes the demands of military life;
- enable individuals to realize their potential and provide them with equal opportunity irrespective of race or gender;
- assist members to prepare for second careers;

- take individual and family needs and aspirations into account when determining postings and in the development of policies.

The human resource policy that is put in place must be integrated, comprehensive, transparent and readily understandable by all members.

CONCLUSION

In reflecting upon the work we have done over the past months and the volumes of testimony we have heard, there is no doubt in our minds that the Canadian Forces are an institution with special needs and enormous challenges. There is no equivalent occupation in civil society. The unlimited liability which members assume once enlisted immediately sets them apart.

The fact that we were asked to undertake our study is clear indication that there exists a significant amount of good will to make positive change. Yet, we also recognize that good intentions without adequate resources upon which to build can only lead to further frustration and impotence. We have reached the bottom line. Can the Forces make do with less? No they cannot. If we are going to protect our national interests and participate in missions that promote the values of international peace and democracy — for which all Canadians stand — then our present commitment to the men and women of the Canadian Forces is barely adequate. Indeed, we would not be remiss in suggesting that it has ceased to be adequate. This is a reality with which not only we as Parliamentarians and legislators must come to terms, it is a fact that must be recognized by all Canadians.

Our Forces are there to serve, not simply to be used. When called upon they have taken to their tasks with enthusiasm, skill and a sense of professionalism. They are more than willing to serve, but they are tired of being used. True commitment is rarely one sided. If we are to ask our Forces to commit to the tasks we set for them in pursuit of our national interests, then they have every right to expect us to honour our side of the bargain. It is our responsibility — Parliamentarians and public alike — to ensure that our military personnel are well equipped, properly cared for and equitably compensated. We should do no less.

There is a price attached to unlimited liability — a strict code of discipline, individual and family sacrifice on behalf of the needs of the CF, the ever present danger of serious injury, and even death in the line of duty. There will also be a price attached to the recommendations we have set forth. When implemented we believe they will do much to see to the real needs of our military. When the costing is done, we firmly believe that payment must be made.

Throughout our report we have tried to be realistic and positive. We believe our recommendations attend to the concerns expressed during our hearings and hope that they will adequately meet the needs of CF members. We all came away with the firm conviction that our serving men and women make a vital contribution to Canadian society and for this we applaud them.

Finally, we want to ensure that our recommendations are implemented as quickly as possible and that the actual program, policy and administrative changes put in place

properly reflect our intent. We consider this a matter of accountability. Our accountability as Members of Parliament to the service men and women of the Canadian Forces. And, the accountability of the Minister of National Defence — and through the Minister the senior leadership of the CF — to the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. We therefore recommend:

- 88. That the Chief of the Defence Staff table with SCONDVA an interim report within one year and a comprehensive report within two years on the progress made with respect to quality of life issues in the Canadian Forces.**
- 89. That SCONDVA be empowered, when it deems it appropriate, to visit selective bases to enquire into the effectiveness of reforms made with respect to quality of life issues in the Canadian Forces.**

APPENDIX A

LIST OF WITNESSES

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Department of National Defence	7	October 30, 1997
Maurice Baril, General, Chief of the Defence Staff		
Department of National Defence	12	November 25, 1997
D. Kinsman, Lieutenant-General, Assistant Deputy Minister, Personnel		
Department of National Defence	13	November 27, 1997
G. Davidson, Commodore, Director General, Naval Personnel		
G.R. Maddison, Vice-Admiral, Chief Maritime Staff		
Terry Meloche, Command Chief Petty Officer		
Department of National Defence	14	December 2, 1997
R.R. Crabbe, Lieutenant-General, Deputy Chief of Defence Staff		
Department of National Defence	15	December 4, 1997
R.R. Crabbe, Lieutenant-General, Deputy Chief of Defence Staff		
Department of National Defence	16	December 4, 1997
A. DeQuetteville, Lieutenant-General, Chief of Air Staff		
Gilles Guilbault, Chief Warrant Officer		
Department of National Defence	17	December 9, 1997
R. Duncan, Major, Chief Warrant Officer		
S.T. MacDonald, Major-General, Chief, Reserves and Cadets		
Department of National Defence	18	December 11, 1997
Bill Leach, Lieutenant-General, Chief of Land Staff		
As Individuals	19	January 26, 1998
Brissen, Martine		
Frewen, Jerry		
Kinsman, W.		
Moore, Russell, Rear Admiral		
Provost, D.		
Thomas, C.M.		
White, Colonel (Retired)		
Wilmot, Chief Petty Officer		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
As Individuals	20	January 27, 1998
Berard, G.H., Corporal		
Friessen, Mrs.		
Lavalle, Jean, Lieutenant-Commander		
Little, Lieutenant-Colonel		
Moore, Russell, Rear Admiral		
Wong, Dave, Captain		
Victoria Chamber of Commerce		
Myrna Borleske, Past President		
Cedric Steele		
As Individuals	21	January 28, 1998
Boyce, G.K., Corporal		
Brunnelle, C.D., Master Corporal		
Cruikshank, C., Private		
Gardner, D., Chief Warrant Officer		
Henwood, Bruce, Major		
Hoppe, T.J., Sergeant		
Isaacs, C.A., Master Corporal		
Langlais, C.T., Major		
Ledrew, K., Corporal		
Leonard, W., Corporal		
Leslie, Andrew, Colonel		
McNaughton, R.W., Master Warrant Officer		
Phaneuf, C., Captain		
Plesz, K.A., Master Corporal		
Scherger, T.D., Corporal		
Thibaudeau, F.J., Sergeant		
Vanschepdael, M.J., Sergeant		
As Individuals	22	January 28, 1998
Atkinson, K.D., Corporal		
Brittain, Rob		
Couture, M.J., Corporal		
Damstrom, L., Sergeant		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Deegan, B.A., Sergeant		
Douglas, M.		
Duke, T., Sergeant		
Fleck, M.L., Corporal		
Gardner, D., Corporal		
Gould, R.J.A., Corporal		
Hanif, I.A., Corporal		
Lebeuf, C.F., Corporal		
Lee, Paul		
Lee, Wendy		
Leonard, W., Corporal		
Muise, R.		
Northmore, B.C.		
Pepiot, L.		
Roach, B.P., Captain		
Robinson, S., Sergeant		
Secretan, T., Chief Warrant Officer		
Selbie, J., Corporal		
Stevens, C.E.		
Summers, J.		
Thonklakson, D.M., Sergeant		
Tremblay, C.L., Captain		
Trudel, J.G., Master Warrant Officer		

As Individuals

23 January 29, 1998

Atkinson, Bill, Master Warrant Officer
 Blum, Ike, Master Corporal
 Boisclair, Yvonne, Master Warrant Officer
 Bokovay, Kelly, Padre
 Brown, Mike, Master Corporal
 Browning, Mark, Master Corporal
 Calderone, Tony, Chief Warrant Officer
 Chopowick, Derek, Corporal
 Coates, Ray
 Constable, Dan, Captain
 Crosby, Debbie

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Edelman, John, Master Corporal		
Fenton, Mark, Warrant Officer		
Foss, Donald, Sergeant		
Gelsinger, Cynthia, Master Corporal		
Gemmell, Dennis, Master Corporal		
Goodspeed, Garry, Corporal		
Harrison, Kiek, Corporal		
Hepple, Kate		
Izatt-Coe, Susan		
Kinsman, Ron, Master Warrant Officer		
Lacroix, Paul, Chief Warrant Officer		
Lavoie, Steve, Master Corporal		
Lyne, Dale, Sergeant		
Macumber, Martin, Corporal		
Meaker, Todd, Padre		
Mersereau, Sam, Corporal		
Morin, Laura		
Olofson, Simone		
Reid, Bill, Warrant Officer		
Thaleshvar, Hansa		
As Individuals	24	January 30, 1998
Arnold, Larry, Corporal		
Bertrand, Claude, Lieutenant		
Besette, Elaine		
Boughen, Ray		
Branchaud, G., Warrant Officer		
Callaghan-Tudor, Sean		
Cooper, Lynn		
Cue, Mike, Sub-Lieutenant		
Dixon, Kim		
Edwards, Janet		
Godin, Yvonne		
Gross, Christine, Major		
Hunter, Tim, Colonel		
Lesnick, Paula, Captain		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Levesque, Darlene		
Levesque, Edith		
MacInnis, Derek, Captain		
O'Rourke, Suzanne		
Robertson, Glen, Major		
Robinson, Cory, Lieutenant		
Ross, Dan, Sergeant		
Sarazin, Brian, Corporal		
Savard, Rebecca		
Schneider, Tammy		
Spence, Terry, Master Corporal		
St. Pierre, Sandy		
Tomlinson, Linda, Captain		
Van Dette, Melissa		
Warner, Terry, Corporal		
Willows, Norma		
Union of National Defence Employees	25	February 3, 1998
Brian Molsberry, Vice-President, Manitoba-Saskatchewan		
Debbie Graham, Vice-President, Newfoundland		
John MacLennan, Ex Vice-President		
As Individuals	26	February 9, 1998
Buteau, Louis, Master Corporal		
Carrier, Raymond		
Couture, Jasmin, Corporal		
Desfossés, Marc, Sergeant		
Éthier, Monique		
Gagné, Ricardo, Corporal		
Gosselin, Richard, Warrant Officer		
Harbec, Gilles, Major		
Kiley, King		
Labonté, Yves, Master Warrant Officer		
Laurencelle, Micheline		
Leblanc, Paul, Master Warrant Officer		
Lessard, Robin, Captain		
Longpré, Danielle		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Provost, Jean-Marc, Corporal Rodrigue, Suzie, Captain Simard, Christian, Corporal Tremblay, Ginette Villeneuve, Pierre, Master Corporal		
As Individuals	27	February 10, 1998
Bouchard, Isola Boudreault, Antoine Daoust, Eric Desgroseilliers, Jean-Luc, Lieutenant-Colonel Gilbert, Daniel, Chief Warrant Officer Gilbert, Danielle Gonthier, Nancy Larivière, Christine, Corporal Marcotte, Benoît, Colonel Ouellet, Marise Pépin, Ghyslain Sammut, Charmaine Simard, Martine Temple, Jan Turcotte, Louis, Captain		
As Individuals	28	February 11, 1998
Baril, Charles, Corporal Bisson, Daniel, Corporal Boudreault, Robert Couturier, René, Master Warrant Officer Desgagné, Bernard, Major Dion, Caroline Gaudet, Luc, Captain Gauthier, Jacques, Major Hébert, Pierre Lajoie, Joan Lavoie, Denis, Chief Martineau, Yvon, Captain Morinville, Valerie		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Parent, Julie, Corporal		
Parisé, Nadine		
Simard, Joan		
Thibault, George		
Tremblay, Sergeant		
Tremblay, Muriel		
Department of National Defence	32	March 10, 1998
D. Kinsman, Lieutenant-General, Assistant Deputy Minister, Personnel		
Federation of Military and United Services Institutes of Canada		
Clive Addy, Major General, National Chairman (Retired)		
University of Ottawa	33	March 12, 1998
Gilles Paquet, Professor		
Wildrid Laurier University		
Terry Copp, Professor		
As Individuals	34	March 16, 1998
Bradley, Renay		
Buczynski, Chris, Master Corporal		
Buczynski, Martine		
Cayen, June		
Dunfield, Jim, Captain		
Geddes, Joanne		
Nicholson, Philip, Sergeant		
Pedersen, Dawn, Corporal		
Plouffe, Jacques, Master Corporal		
Stemmler, Paul, Corporal		
Tierney, Lawrence, Master Corporal		
Wilson, Brian, Master Corporal		
As Individuals	35	March 16, 1998
Aiken, Alice, Lieutenant		
Allen, Lory		
Anthony, Dianne		
Bulger, Rob, Corporal		
Davidson, Peggy		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Demers, François, Sergeant		
Elwood, Jim, Captain		
Farkes, Brian, Captain		
Foreman, Michelle		
Haslip, Dan, Warrant Officer		
Hill, Steven, Lieutenant-Colonel		
Homer, Carl, Corporal		
Huddleston, Corporal		
MacPherson, Donald, Master Corporal		
Maguire, Gladys		
McDonald, Alan, Corporal		
O'Hara, Bob, Sergeant		
Pentney, Dave, Lieutenant-Colonel		
Pierog, Gil, Captain		
Rowsell, Chuck		
Taylor, Dove, Corporal		
Thibault, Beverly		
Waller, Steve		
Watters, Kelly, Corporal		
Wilson, Jeff, Sergeant		
Department of National Defence	36	March 17, 1998
Morrie Evans, General Manager, Operations		
Mike Nelson, CEO, Canadian Forces Housing Agency		
Department of National Defence	37	March 19, 1998
Mike Nelson, CEO, Canadian Forces Housing Agency		
Treasury Board Secretariat		
Claude Caron, Acting Assistant Secretary, Government Operations Sector		
Lawrence Birch, Acting Director, Bureau of Real Property Management		
As Individuals	38	March 23, 1998
Gilbert, Reginald		
Hargreaves, Ted, Lieutenant-Colonel		
Hébert, Mireille		
Hussey, Paul, Colonel		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
McLeod, Trevor, Captain		
Mercer, Kevin, Captain		
Migneault, Daniel, Major		
Moody, Carole		
Murphy, Paul, Corporal		
Pringle, Brian		
Richardson, Philip, Lieutenant-Corporal		
Royer, Gisèle, Major		
Schopf, Theresa		
Sherwood, George, Major		
Smith, Helen		
Smith, Ray		
Stewart, Karen		
von Wiedner, Achim, Captain		
Department of National Defence	39	March 24, 1998
Pierre Lemay, Colonel, Director General, Compensation and Benefits		
Department of National Defence	40	March 26, 1998
Jean-Pierre Cyr, Lieutenant-Colonel		
Pierre Lemay, Colonel, Director General, Compensations and Benefits		
Renée Jolicoeur, Director, Accounts Processing, Pay and Pensions		
As Individuals	41	March 30, 1998
Blouin, Rick, Sergeant		
Chamberlain, Gordon		
Critch-Smith, Lucy		
Dumais, M.J., Colonel		
Fournier, Jean-Charles, Chief Warrant Officer		
Gaboury, Barb		
Gillam, Herber, Captain		
Harvey, Ivan, Sergeant		
Hovdestad, Dave		
Jobin, Denis		
Lepage, Sylvain, Major		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Ochosky, Jason		
Porteous, Jason		
Quade, Janice		
Romanow, M.L., Lieutenant-Colonel		
Stonehouse, Jon		
Wheeler, Dawn		
Witty, Irene		
As Individuals	42	March 30, 1998
Abram, Richard		
Beck, David		
Bedard, Louis, Sergeant		
Black, Elaine		
Blow, Mike, Captain		
Cook, Andy, Captain		
Critch-Smith, Lucy, Master Corporal		
Foster, Britta		
Gagnon, André, Captain		
Knauer, Klaus		
Lauzé, Martine, Lieutenant		
McCullins, Mark, Lieutenant		
McRitchie, Heather, Corporal		
Miller, Vern		
Panasky, Steve		
Paquet, Denis, Corporal		
Perrault, Gwen		
Quade, Mark, Corporal		
Warden, Bev		
Treasury Board Secretariat	43	March 31, 1998
Alain Jolicoeur, Chief Human Resources Officer		
Fernand Lamarche, Human Resources Executive		
Tony Rizzotto, Acting Director, Executive and Excluded Groups Compensation		
Department of National Defence	44	April 1, 1998
Y. DeBlois, Captain, Project Manager, Supply Chain Project		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Peter Gartenburg, Brigadier-General, Director General, Management Renewal Services		
Robert Hanson, Director, Civilian Employment Policies		
Kathryn Howard, Manager, Alternative Services Delivery		
Robert Ryan, Lieutenant-Colonel, Project Manager, Goose Bay		
As Individuals	46	April 20, 1998
Bargill, Marguerita		
Bass, Darnell, Sergeant		
Beaumont, Cheryl		
Cawley, Diane		
Ceccato, Franco, Corporal		
Cross, Gavin		
Eglinton, Pat		
George, Tina		
Hulbert, Angela		
Hulbert, Michael, Corporal		
Madaire, Alex, Corporal		
McCabe, Corporal		
Mercredi, Stan, Master Corporal		
Nachuk, Bill, Private		
Nantel, Julie		
Paasila, Beverly		
Paisley, Tom, Corporal		
Palamedes, Dena		
Paquette, Betty		
Paramor, Ron, Corporal		
Patty		
Perry, Monique, Master Corporal		
Sheppard, David, Corporal		
Tardiff, Marc		
West, Jennifer		
Wylie, Robert, Corporal		
As Individuals	47	April 21, 1998
Adams, Nancy		
Brodhagen, Brad, Lieutenant		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Byrne, Kevin, Sergeant		
Campbell, Jacques, Corporal		
Chamberlain, Mary		
Coppicus, P.G., Corporal		
Eagar, Pat		
Eglinton, Pat		
Evans, Millie		
Gagnon, Laurie		
Graham, Steve, Captain		
Harlow, Anne		
James, Raymond, Warrant Officer		
Langlois, Claude, Corporal		
MacDougall, Rod, Sergeant		
Malejczuk, Angela		
McKimmie, J., Private		
Natynczyk, Walter, Lieutenant-Colonel		
O'Neill, Pete, Corporal		
Pitcher, Dale		
St-Amand, Gaetan, Master Corporal		
Tebbutt, Margaret		
Department of National Defence	48	April 21, 1998
Romeo Dallaire, Lieutenant-General, Assistant Deputy Minister, Personnel		
Department of National Defence	50	April 23, 1998
Jim Jamieson, Director, Military Family Support, Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency		
Department of National Defence	51	April 27, 1998
Jim Butters, Master Warrant Officer		
Chris Byrne, Sergeant		
Jim Calvin, Colonel		
Tyrone Green, Captain		
Elise Huffman		
Scott Leblanc, Officer Cadet		
Mike McCarthy, Chief Warrant Officer		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Department of National Defence	53	April 28, 1998
Maurice Baril, General, Chief of the Defence Staff		
Terry Meloche, Command Chief Petty Officer		
Wendy Clay, Major General, Director General, Health Services		
Canadian Association of Veterans in UN Peacekeeping	55	April 30, 1998
John Gardam, Acting President		
Canadian Peacekeeping Veterans Association		
Jim MacMillan-Murphy, Member		
Department of National Defence		
Maurice Baril, General, Chief of the Defence Staff		
R.G. McLellan, Lieutenant-Colonel, Special Project Officer for COS ADM (Personnel)		
Scott Cameron, Colonel, Director, Medical Services		
Royal Canadian Legion		
R.E. Keast, Assistant Director, Service Bureau		
As Individuals	56	May 4, 1998
Bolger, Michael, Corporal		
Bradley, Corporal		
Dickey, Ann, Private		
Higgins, Yvonne, Corporal		
James, Greg, Sergeant		
Ledgister, Leon, Private		
Marin, Robert, Master Seaman		
McTaggart, John, Sergeant		
Petrash, Tim, Master Corporal		
Poirier, Stan, Sergeant		
Pottle, Stephen, Sergeant		
Russell, Lorrie, Corporal		
Russell, Nelson, Corporal		
Sandall, Ken, Corporal		
Seed, Doug, Chief Warrant Officer		
York, Jim, Sergeant		
As Individuals	57	May 4, 1998
Anslanian, Vatche		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Audet, Nivard		
Barnett, Debra		
Barsby, Helen		
Daley, Heather		
Drew, Anthony, Corporal		
Foley, Debbie		
Frechette, Sylvie		
Huckstep, Colleen		
Kerr, Brent, Captain		
Kiah, Melinda		
Kirchner, Wolfgang, Captain		
Knott, Shelley		
Krause, Kathy		
Laplane, Denise		
Leblanc, Nathalie		
LeBreton, Brian, Corporal		
Mawhinney, Lee		
McCance, Louise		
Nightingale, Chris		
Plourde, Luc, Captain		
Pritchard-Thornhill, Ann		
Rice, Tony, Corporal		
Robinson-Vincent, David		
Roy, Carol		
Sterling, David, Corporal		
Trudeau, Mireille		
Villeneuve, Liana		
Wahl, Darlene		
Walsh, Mike, Sergeant		
As Individuals	58.	May 5, 1998
Babin, Al		
Barnes, Boyd, Captain		
Buckle, Joe, Sergeant		
Crawley, Art, Captain		
Ethier, Theresa, Corporal		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Kristiansen, Joe, Corporal		
Langevin, Ron, Sergeant		
Quick, Brian, Captain		
Quinn, Terry		
Suppa, Laverne		
Walsh, Wade, Master Corporal		
Woodhead, Phil, Master Corporal		
As Individuals	59	May 7, 1998
Beaulieu, Beverly		
Champoux, Joseph André		
Hazelwood, Eric		
Hurley, Elizabeth		
Hurley, Michael		
Innes, Mike		
Lannon, Al		
Mackinnon, Dean, Master Seaman		
MacQueen, Wanda		
Millar, Fred, Chief		
Moffatt, Rick, Chief Warrant Officer		
Naud, Jocelyn		
Pennell, Larry		
Pressault, Carol		
Riordon, Susan		
Romard, Trina, Corporal		
Russell, Dawn, Captain		
Saueracker, R.H. "Rudi"		
Tremblay, Patricia		
West, Howard		
White, Allan		
As Individuals	60	May 8, 1998
Castonguay, Mario, Corporal		
Corn, Earl, Chief Petty Officer		
March, Deborah, Captain		
Materi, Tim, Master Seaman		
McCluskey, Jim, Warrant Officer		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Miller, Dusty, Rear Admiral		
Smith, Joy		
St-John, Barb		
Taylor, Sean, Captain		
Tremblay, Dane, Corporal		
Department of Veterans Affairs	63	May 12, 1998
Pierre Boutet, Brigadier-General		
Bernard Butler, Assistant Director		
Darrah Mogan, Director General, Health Care Veterans Services		
Dennis Wallace, Assistant Deputy Minister		
Veterans Review & Appeal Board		
Brian Chambers, Chairman		
Department of National Defence	66	May 25, 1998
Dave Roberts, President, SISIP		
Greg Pearson, Chief Programs Officer		
Isidore Popowych, Brigadier-General, Director General, Personnel Support Agency		
Jim Jamieson, Director, Military Family Support, Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency		
Laurie Jackson, Executive Director, Military Family Resource Centre		
Michel Lemoine, President, CANEX		
Department of Defence (US)	67	May 26, 1998
Carolyn Becraft, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence, Personnel Support, Families and Education		
William Huleatt, Lieutenant-Colonel, Associate Director, Office of Family Policy		
Department of National Defence		
Jim Jamieson, Director, Military Family Support, Canadian Forces Personnel Agency		
As Individuals	68	May 28, 1998
Beaudet, André, Chief Warrant Officer		
Beaudette, Mike, Major		
Daneliuk, Dave, Master Corporal		
Fortier, Antonio, Chief Warrant Officer		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Kent, Deborah, Corporal		
Learmouth, Ray, Leading Seaman		
Manser, Steve, Captain		
Miller, Ron, Major		
Milne, Cathie		
Todd, Bob, Chief Petty Officer, 1st Class		
Verrette, Donald, Master Warrant Officer		
Weaver, Barbara		
Zimmerman, Ian, Captain		
As Individuals	69	May 28, 1998
Gunning, Linda		
Johnston, Sheila		
Jurchuk, Greg, Master Seaman		
MacKenzie, Sherry		
Martino, Michael, Sergeant		
Vallée, Nicole, Major		
Wastrodowski, Ron, Chief Petty Officer, 1st Class		
Zacharuk, Nick, Chief Warrant Officer		
As Individuals	70	June 1, 1998
Baillargeon, Fernand, Master Warrant Officer		
Butt, Earle, Master Warrant Officer		
Collins, George		
DeMaine, Frank, Sergeant		
Fisher, Rick, Petty Officer		
Lebel, Céline, Corporal		
Mack, Grant, Master Warrant Officer		
Myatte, George		
Prusila, Alan Matthew, Corporal		
Raymond, Ronald, Petty Officer		
Reid, Bill, Colonel		
Stoddart, Lynn, Captain		
Wheeler, Beverly		

Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
As Individuals	71	June 1, 1998
Beardsall, Nancy		
Bellerive, Bonnie		
Brulé, Taimara		
Burke, George		
Dagenais, Kerry		
Duesling, Dan		
Feaver, Colin, Corporal		
Harrison, Laurie		
Hildebrandt, Inga		
Hoftyzer, Joanne		
Joseph, Rae		
Kennedy, Vince, Colonel		
Meadows, Blair, Corporal		
Nadeau, Marc, Sergeant		
Nitschkie, Candy		
Phillips, Brad		
Rice, Dolores		
Snider, Bob, Sergeant		
Stephen, Alan, Lieutenant-Colonel		
Stubbs, Bruce		
Tessier, Bernie		
Thompson, Dawn		
Thorne, Diane		
Woermke, Christine		
As Individuals	72	June 2, 1998
Armitage, Shannon, Corporal		
Bernath, Patrick, Master Corporal		
Chaplin, David, Major		
Charest, Suzanne, Master Corporal		
Forcier, Renée, Captain		
Gagnon, Martin, Chief Petty Officer, 2nd Class		
Girard, Jacques, Major		
McEachern, Gwen, Captain		
Paine, Mark		

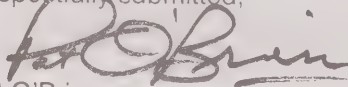
Organizations and Individuals	Meeting	Date
Rockwell, Norman, Master Seaman Sabourin, Colette, Chief Petty Officer		
As Individuals	73	June 2, 1998
Bonin, Mike, Sergeant		
Chénard, Dan		
Cyrene, Katie, Corporal		
Duguay, Serge, Warrant Officer		
Haines, Dan, Captain		
Headley, Neville, Major		
Kyte, Michael, Corporal		
Laughton, Brian, Major		
McCarthy, Donna		
Department of National Defence	74	June 4, 1998
Maurice Baril, General, Chief of the Defence Staff		
Guy Parent, Chief Warrant Officer, Canadian Forces		

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

In accordance with Standing Order 109, the Committee requests that the Government provide a comprehensive response to this report.

A copy of the relevant Minutes of Proceedings (*Meetings Nos. 7, 12 to 28, 32 to 44, 46 to 48, 50 and 51, 53, 55 to 60, 63, 66 to 75, 77 and 78 which includes this report*) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Pat O'Brien', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Pat O'Brien
Chair.

REAL COMMITMENT

Addressing the underlying causes of low morale and the poor quality of life
in the Canadian Forces

The Official Opposition response to the SCNDVA Majority Report

October 1998

For about one year, the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veteran's Affairs (SCONDVA) devoted itself to studying the economic and social challenges facing the members of the Canadian Forces (CF). Hundreds of witnesses ranging from Defence social policy experts to the Chief of Defence Staff to rank-and-file members of the CF testified before us. There was one common theme: Betrayal. CF members feel betrayed by their government and they feel betrayed by their own leaders. In short, the Committee spent more than a year listening to a scathing indictment of government policy.

The Committee heard heart-wrenching stories of forgotten veterans — men who had given their lives or their health in the service of their country — only to have their sacrifice forgotten or belittled by DND bureaucrats. We heard scores of tales of dilapidated houses with flooded basements, moldy walls and leaking roofs. We heard CF members tell of their having to use food banks to make ends meet and CF spouses who live with a sense of abandonment because their husbands or wives are constantly being called for duty in another part of the country or the world. We heard countless concerns about out-of-date equipment and the dangers this poses to our personnel. These were all very real stories about the impact of 30 years of decay in Canada's military.

CF members in many cases risked retribution from the leadership at DND headquarters for testifying before our Committee. Some in fact paid a price. Conditions had become bad enough, however, that they felt a duty to bring their concerns forward. All members of the Committee were moved by these stories.

**These were all very real stories
about the impact of 30 years of
decay in Canada's military.**

What a disappointment, then, to see the final draft of the Majority Report. Instead of addressing the root causes of the problems faced by CF members, the government members of the Committee chose to deal largely with the symptoms. Instead of examining how the Canadian Forces arrived at its current state of malaise and recommending positive, systemic changes to rectify these problems, the majority chose to recommend band-aid solutions. Even the tone of the Majority Report implies that tinkering will fix the malaise of the Forces. Unfortunately, we have seen what tinkering produces. It is 30 years of tinkering that sparked this very exercise.

The Official Opposition believes that this SCONDVA process represents a critical juncture for the Canadian Forces. The direction in which the government now moves will determine whether the problem plagued Forces will be rejuvenated, or merely thrust headlong into more years of underfunding, political correctness, infrastructure decay, dwindling capability, and the low morale and poor quality of life which flows from these.

In fairness to the Majority Report, there are a number of recommendations which we feel are constructive. These include immediate pay increases, better treatment of

veterans, redesignation of special service areas for the purposes of Veteran's Benefits, changes to a wide variety of allowances — particularly making these allowances non-taxable — and a number of other common sense solutions. Nevertheless, there are still symptoms of larger and deeper problems. In this sense the overall tone of the Majority Report and the innumerable calls for increased civilian bureaucracy run contrary to the views expressed by those who testified at Committee hearings. The Official Opposition is therefore compelled to outline its own response to the hearings as well as SCONDVA's Majority Report.

In brief, the Official Opposition sees three broad themes at the heart of the Canadian Forces troubles which must be dealt with in a fundamental way:

1. Inadequate and misdirected funding
2. Crisis of leadership and military justice
3. Pursuit of a politically correct agenda

Without addressing these fundamental problems in any serious way, the government will only be toying with peripheral, symptomatic issues and is thus doomed to fail in any attempt to improve the quality of life and morale in the Canadian Forces.

**Soldiers cannot take pride in a
military that is not fully combat
capable.**

1. INADEQUATE AND MISDIRECTED FUNDING

In his March 1997 Report for the Minister of National Defence, University of Calgary Professor David Bercuson described the present problems in the Canadian Armed Forces as *"a crisis of professionalism."* This crisis of professionalism is rooted in the fact that the Armed Forces, in particular the Army, are today unable to take on an operationally independent combat mission. This fact was admitted by the former Chief of the Defence Staff General Jean Boyle and also noted by the Auditor General in Chapter Seven of his Report to the House of Commons in May of 1996. It was reiterated just this month by the current Chief of Defence Staff, Maurice Baril, in his 1997-1998 Annual Report on the state of the Canadian Forces. In that report, General Baril, stated:

"We possess a limited capability for deploying our forces... The limitations are in the areas of: troop movement and lift capacity; intelligence-gathering; and the ability to effectively lead or co-ordinate multinational operations."

Soldiers of the Canadian Forces cannot take pride in a military that is not fully combat capable. Nor can they enjoy a reasonable quality of life with their families if they remain

badly overtasked. The continuation of this situation has led to a steady erosion of pride and professionalism in the Canadian Forces with an inevitable result: low morale, poor esprit de corps and the emergence of serious social and economic problems. Chronic underfunding has been a major contributor to each of these problems.

Since 1993, the budget of the Department of National Defence has been slashed from over \$12 billion to just over \$9 billion (or a 25% cut in the Defence budget). At the same time, needless and wasteful DND bureaucracy has been maintained and even expanded. For instance, while the Regular Force has been reduced to a mere 60,000 personnel, National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) still comprises more than 5% of all personnel.

There are four areas in which inadequate or misdirected funding is particularly evident:

- i) Equipment shortcomings;
- ii) Overtasking;
- iii) Needless bureaucracy; and,
- iv) Inadequate pay.

i) Equipment shortcomings

Equipment shortcomings have been well chronicled by many Defence experts, by the Auditor General, and by previous parliamentary committees. It is therefore not necessary to go into details here. Suffice it to say that budget slashing and political interference has drastically reduced the Canadian Forces' ability to replace aging equipment. Tanks are 20 years old based on a design that is 30 years old; self-propelled artillery is 30 years old; most of the towed artillery is 40 years old; Navy helicopters are 30 years old; Air Force search and rescue helicopters are 35 years old.

**Those who doubt the link
between equipment, morale,
and the peace of mind of family
members might want to talk to
the families of Search and
Rescue technicians at CFB
Greenwood.**

This has had perhaps the most dramatic effects on the security and morale of CF members. Those who doubt the link between equipment, morale, and the peace of mind of family members might want to talk to the families of Search and Rescue technicians at CFB Greenwood.

We therefore recommend:

1. That, by 2000, the Government of Canada restore the budget of the Department of National Defence to the minimum levels which were outlined by the 1994 Special House and Senate Joint Committee Report (\$10.5 billion).
2. That by 2001, the Defence budget be restored to at least 1994 levels (\$11.6 billion).

ii) Overtasking

Overtasking has led to unacceptable consequences with respect to leave. CF personnel are now frequently unable to take leave for any significant time each year. This is an unnecessary stress on families and leads to exhaustion. The Majority Report, however, makes no comment on the relationship between overtasking and dwindling troop levels. In our view, this is a glaring omission. Instead, the Majority recommends that CF personnel be allowed to take “*a significant period of leave when they desire.*” This is totally unrealistic in a military context. This would clearly jeopardize operational readiness and compromise a commanding officer’s ability to train and deploy his/her troops. The solution lies in increasing the number of troops to a level where each member is not overtasked.

The exact number of personnel should be determined by the military commanders — not politicians. However, we believe that 75,000 Regular Force members is probably minimal.

We therefore recommend:

3. That personnel levels be increased in accordance with the recommendation of military Commanders and that, in this context, a level of 75,000 is probably minimal.
4. That any personnel increases occur in the context of a major reduction of wasteful infrastructure and bureaucracy.

iii) Needless bureaucracy

So much of DND’s budget is misdirected to inappropriate agencies and schemes. The Majority Report encourages this in recommendations ranging from child care programs for teenagers, to more spending on “second career” job searches. Perhaps most glaringly, it suggests an enlargement and expansion of the mandate of the Canadian Forces Housing Agency (CFHA). We strenuously disagree that expanding bureaucratic entities will do anything to address systemic problems within the CF. We believe that it is precisely this sort of bureaucratic thinking that led to the housing problem in the first place.

Housing maintenance and upgrades have traditionally been the purview of the Base Commanders. Under that former system, housing problems were dealt with locally — instead of referring those problems to a distant bureaucrat in Ottawa. In other words, the problem was dealt with by someone who had a personal understanding and interest in the environment in which his/her personnel live and work. In this respect, the former system meant that problems were more likely to be resolved. After all, if personnel were not happy with their allotted housing, it was the Base Commander who paid the price in terms of morale. This sort of pressure is clearly a positive motivator.

Re-establishing Base Commander control over housing would eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy, allow more flexibility, and restore confidence in a system which is by all accounts broken.

We therefore recommend:

- 5. That an 'Infrastructure Renewal' committee be formed within DND by April 1, 1999. This committee would establish a timetable for the renewal of essential Armed Forces housing, bases, stations and other immovable assets to ensure that CF members are given the best possible conditions in which to live and work. This committee would have until April 1, 2000 to fulfill its mandate.**
- 6. That unessential DND land be sold with the proceeds of these sales going directly into DND revenue. This revenue should then be spent on infrastructure upgrades.**
- 7. That the Canadian Forces Housing Agency be scrapped and Base Commanders be once again given control over their local DND housing.**

iv) Inadequate Pay

For too long, CF members and their families — particularly those of lower ranks — have suffered low pay and little chance of promotion. The Official Opposition strongly supports the recommendations of the Majority Report with respect to pay increases. The government must demonstrate its commitment to CF personnel and their families by immediately providing them with substantive pay increases.

We therefore mirror the Majority Report when we recommend:

- 8. That, effective April 1, 1999 the pay for Privates, Second Lieutenants and Lieutenants, essentially entry level ranks, be increased by approximately 10%.**
- 9. That, effective April 1, 1999 the pay for Non-Commissioned Members be increased by approximately 6%; for Captains, through and including**

Lieutenant-Colonels, by approximately 3%; and for Colonels and above by approximately 2%.

We reject, however, the notion that pay levels should be tied in any way to pay levels of the Public Service. (Few, if any, NATO countries do this.) The military is not and should in no way be comparable to the Public Service. The commitment that CF members make and the environment in which they operate put the military in a class of its own. Pay increases should be granted in a timely fashion and should keep pace with inflation and market forces.

In addition, posting and other allowances should be increased to levels which can realistically be expected to cover the costs associated with moves. The levels of these allowances must also take into consideration the local geographic/economic conditions of where the CF member and his/her family are posted.

2. CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP AND MILITARY JUSTICE

Too much careerism, too little operational experience, too many double standards and too many cover-ups. This is a message we heard time and time again during the Committee hearings. The leadership of the Canadian Forces is in crisis. This is not addressed at all adequately in the Majority Report. The report makes merely passing references to the problem. That is unacceptable.

Leadership

Leadership is a central issue and has been so identified by other analysts of Canadian military affairs. Professor David Bercuson who, in his report to the Minister of National Defence wrote:

"The present crisis in the Canadian armed forces is primarily a crisis of leadership ... Each of the several notorious incidents which have come to the attention of the public in the last four years — the murder of Shidane Arone in Somalia, the mental hospital abuses in Bosnia etc. — have occurred because of leadership failures in both the senior NCO and officer ranks. Other problems which have come to light have included senior officers lining their pockets at public expense, loss of respect by the troops for the high command, low morale, and a consequent undermining of public confidence in the Canadian Forces."

The same problem is referred to in Professor Jack Granatstein's Report to the Minister (March 25, 1997) when he quotes a retired Air Force Colonel who remarked:

"There has been a demonstrated lack of ethical oversight, governance, supervision and leadership on the part of the General Officers at NDHQ and elsewhere. This, coupled with a propensity to line their pockets with unbecoming perks and emoluments creates a moral climate unsuitable for the leadership of the armed forces. The troops are watching them and the troops know."

Yet another Report completed for the Minister in March 1997, focused on the collective views of a range of experts on defence policy issues. The majority of these experts concluded that: *“Military leadership values have been eroded because of the imposition of civilian bureaucratic values in the military”*.

Despite the obvious widespread recognition that a serious leadership problem exists in the Canadian Forces, there are no concrete recommendations in the Majority Report to address this problem. In fact, some of the Report’s sections seem oblivious to the fact that any leadership problem exists at all.

For example, the Majority Report states that *“Military culture may explain to some extent the awkwardness and insensitivity the Forces have demonstrated in the past in these matters* (ie. looking after wounded soldiers)”. This is simply not true. The military has always stressed ‘looking after its own’. It is in fact only relatively recently as senior officers have become more detached from the rank and file, that an ‘every man for himself’ attitude has predominated. Honour and compassion are not easily taught. The only way to ensure that the military leadership looks after its own, is to maintain a professional fighting force which extols a soldier’s code centered on values such as duty, honour, and respect for every soldier in the ranks. The military justice system plays a central role in building, encouraging, and enforcing these values. Unfortunately, the present CF justice system is hopelessly broken.

Military Justice

Perhaps the most horrifying example of military justice gone wrong is the recent revelation of apparently widespread sexual abuse in the CF. Botched investigations, cover-ups, insensitivity, unprofessionalism, and downright incompetence have become common descriptions of the way the Military Police and its sidekick the National Investigation Service conduct themselves. Investigations, prosecutions, legal defence, and courts martial must all be seen to be competent, professional, fair, impartial, and independent.

We therefore recommend:

- 10. That the military justice system be reformed to ensure a level playing field, with penalties for inappropriate or illegal behaviour being equally applied to both Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers.**
- 11. That the military justice system be reformed to ensure independence in investigations, prosecutions, legal defence, and judging. The cornerstone of these reforms would be the creation of an office of Inspector General.**

12. That all investigations of violent crime in the CF be conducted by the RCMP.

It should be noted, that the government recently introduced amendments to the *National Defence Act* in the form of Bill C-25. They squandered that opportunity — the first chance in over 50 years to make substantive changes to the military justice system — so it is not surprising that there is no mention of military justice in the Majority Report.

3. PURSUIT OF A POLITICALLY CORRECT AGENDA

Gone are the days that merit was the basis for selection for service in the Canadian Forces. Instead, politically correct planners have instituted race and gender quotas which belittle the notion of equality and, perhaps more frighteningly, undermine our military's combat capability. In addition, political correctness — and the artificial quotas which result — are extremely damaging to morale, cohesion, and confidence among CF personnel, particularly in the combat arms.

In his recent Annual Report on the state of the Canadian Forces, the Chief of the Defence Staff, General Baril noted:

"For fiscal year 1998-99, Land Force Command has a recruiting target of 1,000 people, of which 25% are to be women. ... In addition to the recruiting target for women, the CF has established targets of 7% for visible minorities and 3% for Aboriginal people."

This is in marked contrast to the Liberal approach of just a few years ago. In 1982, the Senate Sub-Committee on National Defence (composed of a majority of Liberal members) stated that:

"The Sub-committee believes and recommends that military viability — that is to say the capacity to execute competently the military tasks which are demanded of them — remain the essential criterion for judging the operations of the armed forces."

How is it that common sense has been allowed to slip so badly in just 16 years? Despite the fact that SCONDVA heard nothing in support of quotas during its hearings, the Majority Report nevertheless parrots the politically correct line in statements such as:

"The Army has requested that 25% of those recruited to combat arms be women, in order to obtain a critical mass for training and employment in various units."

One must ask the following questions: How do quotas for the entry of certain categories of persons into the Forces (or the combat arms) contribute to the maintenance of a combat capable force? How does the lowering of standards to allow for the integration of women into the infantry, armour, artillery and combat engineer roles improve the combat effectiveness of the Army?

The answer, of course, is that gender/racial/religious or any other demographic quotas do nothing to improve combat capability. In fact, quotas by necessity have a negative effect on combat capability since the achievement of these quotas is dependent on altering physical or other standards that would otherwise be required for entry to the Forces.

The foundation for much of the current political correctness in the CF is the 1989 Canadian Human Rights Commission Tribunal ruling which stipulated that the CF must have “*complete integration*” of women in the combat arms within 10 years. This raises the further question: Should the Canadian Forces be exempted in some way from Human Rights Commission rulings?

In light of the advent of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the consequent legal implications of ignoring Human Rights Commission rulings, the Defence Department finds itself in a precarious position. On the one hand it must protect its combat capability. On the other, it is forced to lower its standards in order to implement artificial demographic quotas. Clearly the solution to this problem is beyond the control of the Department of National Defence. Only the federal government has the power to exempt the Department from externally imposed quotas.

**Unfortunately, the Liberals’
worst fears have been
recognized.**

Ironically, it was the Liberals who first recognized this. In the same 1982 Senate Sub-Committee Report, the Liberal led Committee suggested using the “notwithstanding” clause of the Charter to “*extend to the Armed Forces the essential exemptions required to fulfill their role....*”

The Senate Report then made the following recommendation:

“The Sub-Committee recommends that DND urgently package its requirements for exemptions from the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and draft such consequential amendments to the National Defence Act as may be necessary. The Minister of National Defence should then present those amendments to government and Parliament for serious and prompt consideration.”

In other words, the Liberals recognized that the primary role of the Canadian Forces — combat readiness — was going to be affected by the introduction of race and gender based hiring quotas. They also recognized that it was incumbent on the government (a Liberal government) that special exemption be made for the Canadian Forces.

Unfortunately, the Liberals' worst fears have been recognized. Not only has the combat capability of the Forces already been compromised, but the apparent urgency with which DND is implementing its quota policy is, in fact, picking up steam.

While the Department is very careful about making written statements about dropping physical or other aptitude related requirements, one gets an occasional glimpse at the reality of the quota policy. In December of 1996, then Deputy Army Commander of the Army, (now Chief of Land Staff) Major-General Leach, issued an order which signalled the reduction of physical standards requirements. The order stated that:

"Doctrine or practices that are incompatible with unrestricted participation (of designated groups) will be changed."

At what point did we depart from the notion that we *should* restrict participation in the combat arms to the most capable?

In light of the potentially devastating effect of quotas on the military in general and on the combat arms in particular, we echo the 1982 Senate Sub-Committee on National Defence when we recommend the following:

- 13. That DND urgently package its requirements for exemptions from the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and draft such consequential amendments to the *National Defence Act* as may be necessary. The Minister of National Defence should then present those amendments to government and Parliament for serious and prompt consideration.**
- 14. That DND formally adopt hiring, placement, and promotion policies which are based on the principle of merit and which, at their core, protect equality of opportunity.**

Political correctness must play no role in military planning. The results are not only detrimental to combat readiness, they tend to have a snowball effect. Political correctness has spiraled out of control at DND. Incredibly, in September of this year, the Canadian Forces announced that it would underwrite the costs of "gender-reassignment" surgery for CF members.

Other groups in society at large may argue that there is something positive to be gained from 're-assigning gender', but it is pretty hard to imagine any positive military gain. This surely represents the height of absurdity. Even the choice of language used to describe the operation betrays the stupidity of the policy.

We therefore recommend:

- 15. That DND put an immediate end to any social experimentation policies which impair combat readiness.**

The bottom line is that Canada needs strong, combat-ready and combat-capable Armed Forces. This must be the primary guiding principle behind any government or DND policy. Political correctness and its cousins: hiring quotas and social engineering, must be removed from the realm of the military. Those who advocate these choices should fight their battles in civil society and be thankful that their ability to do so is protected by the military.

CONCLUSION

We were genuinely shocked and disappointed by the SCONDVA Majority Report. Members of our Committee heard first-hand accounts of the grim circumstances under which many current and former CF personnel live and work. Even the most hardened skeptic would have thought that the government members of the Committee would be moved to press for fundamental, systemic change within DND and the Canadian Forces. Unfortunately, the government members chose to stay the course. They rejected substance in favour of window dressing. They rejected change in favour of the status quo. In so doing, the government members of the Committee are sending a terrible message to those who testified. They are saying, “We weren’t listenings.”

The government now stands at a crucial crossroads in the life of the Canadian Forces. The government is faced with two options: It can continue to reject substantive change and continue to allow the proud Canadian Forces to flounder, or it can seize this opportunity to reinvigorate Canada’s military. We hope the government chooses the latter. The Canadian Forces are too important to let slip away as a result of neglect.

We acknowledge that positive change will not be easy. Such reforms will be fraught with considerable controversy and will require determination to implement. While it would be politically easier to look the other way, we feel that it is incumbent on the government to live up to its obligation to the serving members of the Canadian Forces. The time for idle promises has past. The Official Opposition urges the government to take immediate, substantive action to set the Canadian Forces on the road toward renewal.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1998

(Meeting No. 78)

[Text]

The Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs met at 3:30 p.m. this day, in Room 362, East Block, the Chair, Pat O'Brien, presiding.

Members of the Committee present: Rob Anders, Robert Bertrand, Hec Clouthier, Gordon Earle, Art Hanger, René Laurin, Judi Longfield, Pat O'Brien, John O'Reilly, David Pratt, David Price, John Richardson, Bob Wood.

Acting Members present: Ghislain Lebel for Maurice Godin and Leon Benoit for Peter Goldring.

In attendance: From the Library of Parliament: Wolfgang Koerner and Michel Rossignol, Research Officers.

The Committee resumed consideration of a draft report.

It was agreed, — That the Chair be allowed to make all the editorial changes necessary to reflect the amendments proposed to the text of the draft report.

It was agreed, — That the Committee do request a Government Response to the Report, pursuant to Standing Order 109.

It was agreed, — That the Chair be allowed to table the Report in the House, as soon as the editorial changes are incorporated to the text of the Report.

It was moved, — That the Report, as amended, be approved by the Committee.

After debate, the question being put on the motion, it was agreed to, on division.

It was agreed, — That the Committee append the dissenting opinion of the Reform Party following the Chair's signature.

At 5:35 p.m., the Committee adjourned to the call of the Chair.

Eugene Morawski
Clerk of the Committee

